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A

VIEW

OF

LORD BOLINGBROKE'S

PHILOSOPHY;

In Four LETTERS to a FRIEND.

LETTERS First and Second.

O PROCERES! Cenſore opus eſt, an Haruſpice nobis?

JUV.

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Nec Deus intersit, nisi dignus vindice nodus
Hor.

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TO

****** ****** Esq.

DEAR SIR,

LORD BOLINGBROKE'S PHILOSOPHY, ſo much and ſo long talked of, is now come, and very fairly, into the hands of the Public. For I think it unjuſt to the Editor, to ſuppoſe his Lordſhip did not intend the World this LEGACY. His laſt Will ſufficiently ſhews us his kind intention. But it will be ſaid, he ſpeaks of it, as a thing compoſed only for the ſolace and admiration of a few friends in a corner [1]. What then? might not his Lordſhip change his mind, and extend his benefits? Hardly, you will ſay, without *contradicting* his profeſſed principles. So much the

[1] "Let us ſeek truth, but ſeek it quietly as well "as freely. Let us not imagine, like ſome who are "called FREE-THINKERS, that every man who can "think and judge for himſelf (as he has a right to do) "has therefore a right of SPEAKING, any more than of "*acting*, according to the full freedom of his thoughts. "The freedom belongs to him as a rational creature. "He lies under the reſtraint as a *member of Society*. "— As we think for ourſelves, we may keep our "thoughts to ourſelves or communicate them with a "DUE RESERVE, and in ſuch manner ONLY, as it "may be done without *offending the Laws of our Coun-*"*try, and diſturbing the public peace.*" — *Introductory Letter to Mr. Pope*, Vol. iii. p. 343. Quarto Edition.

better.

better. The publication then will be of a piece with the reſt. And never trouble your head with one *contradiction*, where you may meet with a thouſand.

Quid te exempta levat ſpinis de pluribus una?

Now tho' I know You have as little Curioſity to hear what a Freethinker can object to the FAITH which has got poſſeſſion of your heart, as what a Pick-pocket can chicane to the Property in your purſe: yet the name of L. BOLINGBROKE's METAPHYSICS, (which, I think, were become as famous, and hitherto as little underſtood, as his POLITICS) cannot ſure but incline you to ſome ſlight acquaintance at leaſt with this FIRST PHILOSOPHY, as he calls it; and which, in the manner of other Conquerors, he erects on a general deſolation.

The only part of his Lordſhip's Character, that yet remained equivocal, was his LITERARY. How this will fare by the publication of his *Philoſophy*, I will not pretend to ſay; perhaps not altogether ſo well as his Friends might give him the pleaſure to expect. He frequently tells his reader, that the Doctrine of his ESSAYS and FRAGMENTS had been occaſionally thrown out amongſt them, and made the

ſubject

ſubject of many free converſations. While haranguing in that circle, I will ſuppoſe he met with the applauſe he ſought for. But had he choſe to bring them to the bar of the Publick himſelf, he might have ſeen ſtrange revolutions. "Illic, et Judex *ta-*
"*cet*, et Adverſarius *obſtrepit*, et nihil TE-
"MERE DICTUM perit: et, ſiquid TIBI
"IPSE SUMAS, PROBANDUM EST: et,
"omiſſo MAGNA SEMPER FLANDI TU-
"MORE, loquendum eſt[1]." Indeed his Lordſhip could hardly expect to eſcape the ſeverity of this tribunal but by a very ſuperior merit: Since his meditations on divine matters are ſo extenſive, that ſcarce any one, who has written in defence of Virtue, or Religion, but will find himſelf either inſulted in his perſon or miſrepreſented in his opinions; and merely for being in his Lordſhip's way.

But ſure, when a man of his polite manners had condeſcended to enter into learned altercation, the world might at leaſt expect a Model for the *courtly management of Controverſy*: which, once for all, ſhould have either reformed, or ſhould for ever diſcredit the groſſer Polemics of

[1] Quint.

the Schools. So that tho' the DIVINE would expect no great *matter* from these *oracles of reason*, yet he would readily accept his amends in the *manner* of so elegant a pen. And perhaps you will think, Divines had been no losers by this equivalent: You, who have observed that, in their commerce with the World, the chief difficulty lies in the *Forms*: Indeed, they have been generally thought wanting in them; whether their pride prompts them to appeal to the Authority of Reason; or their prudence teaches them to submit to the Wisdom of their Betters. And the management of their controversies in the Schools, and the prosecution of their interests in Courts, have, on different accounts, been equally obnoxious to the censure of their adversaries. I would willingly avoid both these extremes. For I would, if possible, preserve and support that love and reverence to an useful Body, which the noble Writer, relying, not on his own Politics, but on other men's, has, in his *fourth Essay*, devoted to Destruction. He, indeed, may call for aid on the *Secular arm*; he has the old reason for so doing; but, I dare say, the *Clergy* never will.

Things are now come to that pass, that the State seems to be in more need of their Support, than They, of the State's. For, tho' the cavils of licentious men always end in the Confirmation of Truth and Virtue, yet they generally set out in loosening the hold, which Religion has on the PEOPLE. And when that is gone, what other Engine the Magistrate will invent, to keep the multitude in order, They, whose principal concern it is, would do well to consider.

As I said, then, I had taken it for granted, that our noble Adversary, for an Adversary he has condescended to be, and a warm conflict it is likely to prove, would be principally anxious to teach us in his writings, what was his wont in conversation, that studied politeness, which is so well fitted to keep inferiors at a distance: And that, when he had declared mortal war against every thing the world hath hitherto called RELIGION; and against that Order, (call them as you will, PRIESTS, or MINISTERS) which all states had thought proper to establish, for the Support of it, we should see his attack carried on by the fairest as well as strongest reasoning, the

gentleſt as well as the firmeſt addreſs, and the politeſt as well as the keeneſt raillery.

But how was I diſappointed, to find this Conſervator of States, this Legiſlator in Philoſophy and Religion, utterly unable to raiſe his head above the rank contagion of the Schools: to ſee Polemics go their uſual train; and this Sun of our new Syſtem, whirled along the turbid vortex of controverſy, like any the moſt *ignoble* of the earthly Bodies! But his POET, or rather his *Prophet*, (who ſo magnificently announced to us the glad tidings of all theſe good things) had prepared us for it. He had contemplated this ſtrange phenomenon: not, indeed, without ſurprize. It is, ſays he,

——" mighty odd:
" A fit of vapours clouds this DEMI-GOD."

To be plain, I met with nothing in theſe big Volumes, but the rankneſs of SOUTH without his force; and the malignity of MARVEL without his wit. You ſhall not believe me on my own word: the evidence lies before us. Give me leave then to preſent you with a SPECIMEN, under his own hand, of his candour, his temper,

temper, and infinite politeneſs. And tho' one can but ill judge of the *harveſt* by a ſample of the field-flowers, yet we may form a pretty good gueſs of the *ſoil*.

Nor is this intemperance of language, of which I propoſe to give you a taſte, the mere eſcape of fancy or humour, which it would be charity to overlook: It is a ſort of *formula dicendi*, without which, all his Lordſhip's authentic acts of Legiſlation would be invalid: It is the very SPIRIT of his *new Religion*, without which, the whole would be indeed but a *dead letter*.

It was with the leſs reluctance I entered on this part of my deſign, that I might have to juſtify to the world the plainneſs and freedom with which I may hereafter chance to treat his Lordſhip's REASONING; (as you know I am ſometimes thinking to give it a thorough Examination;) for, the excellent Quintilian well obſerves, "Præ-
"ſtatur hoc aliquando etiam DIGNITATI-
"BUS ut libertatis noſtræ RATIO reddatur,
"ne quis nos aut *petulantes* in lædendis his,
"aut etiam *ambitioſos* putet."

Without any further preface, then, let the Shew begin: Only premiſing, that as his Lordſhip had a FIRST PHILOSOPHY to

erect, he had an immenſe deal of rubbiſh to remove: The rubbiſh of every great Name, and of every ſacred Order: all of which ſtood directly in his way.

With CUDWORTH he begins: and of CUDWORTH he ſays, *The heads of many reverend perſons have been turned by a preternatural fermentation of the brain, or a philoſophical delirium. None hath been more ſo than this divine* [1]. Again, CUDWORTH [in his INTELLECTUAL SYSTEM] *gives you little leſs than a nonſenſical paraphraſe of nonſenſe. It was not his fault. The good man paſſed his life in the ſtudy of an unmeaning jargon; and as he learned, he taught* [2].

To talk, like CUMBERLAND, *of promoting the good of the whole Syſtem of rational Agents, amongſt whom God is included, and of human benevolence towards him, is to talk metaphyſical jargon and theological blaſphemy* [3].

CLARKE *triumphs in this fooliſh and wicked rhodomondate, &c.* [4]—*All* CLARKE *ſays about the diſcovery of God's will, is a rhapſody of preſumptuous reaſoning and of*

[1] Vol. iii. p. 353. of his Works, in Quarto.
[2] Vol. iv. p. 92. [3] Vol. v. p. 82.
[4] Vol. v. p. 252.

prophane

prophane abſurdities [5]. — *Audacious and vain Sophiſt! His terms have a ſolemn air, that may impoſe on the unwary, and confirm the habitual prejudices of others; but more abſurdity cannot be ſtuffed into ſo few words* [6].

Declaiming againſt WOLLASTON, he ſays, *But I will detain you no longer about ſuch diſcourſe as would convince you, if you heard it at* MONROE'S, *that the Philoſopher who held it was a patient of the Doctor's not yet perfectly reſtored to his ſenſes* [7]. Again, of the ſame excellent Perſon, *We have here an example of the ſecond ſort of Madneſs mentioned above. The man who writ all this nonſenſe was a man of parts,* — *But when theſe learned Lunaticks, &c.* [8].

CLARKE and WOLLASTON are now grown outragious; and fit only to be chained together. So that henceforth they are rarely ſhewn aſunder. We ſometimes find them in the *height of a metaphyſical frenzy* [9]: And, by what one can ſee, without much provocation. They had proved the Soul to be a thinking ſubſtance diſtinct from Matter: And I

[5] Vol. v. p. 292. [6] Vol. v. p. 395.
[7] Vol. iii. p. 518. [8] Vol. v. p. 374.
[9] Vol. iii. p. 514.

don't know of any body, before his Lordſhip (who very civilly permitted them to enjoy the honour of it for life) that pretended to queſtion the *demonſtration*.

The Preſident FORBES is *really mad*; but it is only *quoad hoc*. For obſerve, he was *no Divine by profeſſion, but ſomething better* [10]. Indeed, not much. He was a LAWYER. Of which *unlearned* Profeſſion, as he calls it, *ninety nine in a hundred at leaſt*, (he ſays) *are Petty-foggers, Sharpers, Brawlers, and Cavillers* [11].

But, to give the better edge to his well-tempered language, he ſometimes dips it in irony: and then it is, *The good Earl of Nottingham*; and the *righteous Biſhop Sherlock*. They deſerved this compound abuſe. For the Firſt publickly defended, and ably too, that *Faith* which ſtands ſo much in his way: and the Other once ventured to oppoſe that *Party*, whoſe patronage he had then condeſcended to aſſume.

He comes next to the whole BODY of the Chriſtian Clergy. And now the *firſt Philoſophy* begins to work; and the taſk to grow ſerious. The PRIMITIVE SAINTS and DOCTORS have the precedence, as is fitting. "The liſt of MARTYRS conſiſt-

[10] Vol. v. p. 523. [11] Vol. ii. p. 353.

"ed

" ed, I believe, of thoſe who ſuffered for " BREAKING THE PEACE [11]. The PRI- " MITIVE CLERGY were, under pretence " of Religion, a very LAWLESS TRIBE [12]." " ALL the Chriſtian FATHERS uſing a DE- " LIRIOUS STYLE, it became that of Chri- " ſtian Theology [13.]" " It would ſcarce " be poſſible to believe that the greateſt " Saints and Doctors of the Church had " talked ſo much BLASPHEMOUS NONSENSE, " and employed ſo much *artifice* about it, " if their writings were not extant [14]." —" Of all this *abſurdity*, *prophaneneſs*, *and* " *ridicule*, they who built up Chriſtian " theology were guilty." You aſk, with impatience, What was this *abſurdity?* &c. He was going to tell you; for he never minces matters. " They ADDED (ſays he) " the EPISTLES to the GOSPELS; the doc- " trines of PAUL to thoſe of CHRIST; till " the APOCALYPSE became a part of our " holy Scriptures [15]." And now, I hope, you are ſatisfied; and ready for what he tells us was the reſult, That " Chriſtian " Divines and Philoſophers have done

[11] Vol. iv. p. 434. [12] Id. ib.
[13] Vol. iv. p. 612. [14] Vol. iv. p. 303.
[15] Vol. iv. p. 371.

" more

"more to DEBASE our notions of the ſu-
"preme Being, than all the Doctors of
"Polytheiſm [16]."

This was reaſonably well, for new-beginners: But nothing like the feats of MODERN DIVINES.

"It is MADNESS, *or ſomething* WORSE
"*than madneſs*, for Divines to imagine
"themſelves able to comprehend a whole
"Oeconomy of divine Wiſdom from *Adam*
"down to *Chriſt*. And yet this is ſo cuſ-
"tomary, that not only the learned and
"ingenious, but every dabbler in Theolo-
"gy, who muſt paſs for a *fool* or a *knave*
"whenever he grows extravagant, affects
"to reaſon in the ſame manner [17]."

—"Would Divines inſiſt chiefly on the
"external proofs of the authenticity of
"Scripture— they would avoid *a great deal*
"*of* BLASPHEMY [18]."— "They are ab-
"ſurd and licentious in urging both the
"external and internal evidence of Revela-
"tion [19]."

—"Our Divines turn themſelves to de-
"claim on certain and undoubted marks of
"the divine Authority of the Scriptures of

[16] Vol. iii. p. 541.
[17] Vol. iv. p. 274.
[18] Vol. iii. p. 272.
[19] Vol. iv. p. 273.

"the

" the Iſraelites—Let us compare ſome of
" theſe ſuppoſed marks with thoſe of hu-
" man original, and they will ſtare us in
" the face, and point out plainly the FRAUD
" and IMPOSTURE [20]."

—" It is common and yet aſtoniſhing to
" obſerve, with how much ſolemnity and
" confidence almoſt all thoſe who teach
" and defend Chriſtianity, preſume to AF-
" FIRM ANY THING, tho' never ſo evident-
" ly FALSE [1]."

—" The beſt, and even ſuch as paſs for
" the faireſt controverſial Writers, improve
" by artifice the natural infirmity of the
" human mind. They do, on purpoſe,
" confound ideas and perplex the ſigni-
" fication of ſigns—the moſt ſcandalous
" frauds are applauded under the name of
" ſubtilties. This I call theological fraud [2]."
Hence, in another place, he ſays, that *fol-
ly and knavery prevail moſt amongſt Divines*
[3], and again, that They are THE PLAGUES
AND SCOURGES OF THE WORLD [4].

" The doctrine of Clarke and other
" Chriſtian Divines about our obligation

[20] Vol. iii. p. 288.
[2] Vol. iii. p. 424—5.
[4] Vol. iv. p. 435.
[1] Vol. iv. p. 295.
[3] Vol. v. p. 6.

" to

" to imitate God is FALSE and PRO-
" PHANE [5]."

" Divines have IMPUDENTLY and
" WICKEDLY assumed, that there is a law
" of right reason common to God and
" man [6]."

" What I have advanced will be treated
" as an impious paradox by some of the
" trifling solemn dogmatists in Criticism and
" Theology, who have advanced so many
" *absurd and impious* paradoxes of their
" own [7]."

We now come to what the noble author calls the DELIRIUM OF METAPHYSICAL THEOLOGY [8].— " The man who walk-
" ed soberly about in the Bedlam of Paris,
" and believed himself God the Father,
" was mad. Thus the Philosopher, who
" takes a bold leap from a few clear and
" distinct ideas to the first principles of
" things, is *mad* [9]."

" The *reasoners à priori* resemble very
" much one sort of MADMEN. Some of
" these are so VERY MAD that they lose all
" use of their reason. Others again deduce

[5] Vol. v. p. 65. [6] Vol. v. p. 77.
[7] Vol. v. p. 190. [8] Vol. iii. p. 356.
[9] Vol. iv. p. 139.

" conse-

" conſequences, and argue very juſtly, but " are STILL MAD: becauſe they reaſon " from principles that have no appearance " of reality out of their own overheated and " diſordered imaginations. You will find " inſtances of this kind, without the trou- " ble of going to *Bedlam*; but you will " find them principally in *Colleges* and " *Schools* [10]."

— " They deſerve to be treated like " patients proper for Dr. MONROE, and " to be put under his care. Nothing leſs " than *Metaphyſics* could have turned ſo " many good heads [11]."

Well then, Divines are all MAD; and, for fear of miſchief, in ſafe cuſtody. Sometimes indeed, his Lordſhip lets them out to cool, and air themſelves; nay, he is ſo good to give them their lucid intervals; but it is only to *play the rogue*, and to *cant in the pulpit*; and then, back again to their kennel, to *Monroe*, and his diſcipline; or, what is ſtill worſe, to his Lordſhip's; to hear themſelves called *Fools*, *Knaves*, *Cheats*, *mad men*, *Impoſtors*, and *Blaſphemers*. And, for theſe haſty changes of the Scene, he has contrived a moſt in-

[10] Vol. v. p. 369. [11] Vol. v. p. 417.

genious

genious expedient. He has divided the Clergy into the two claſſes of *Theologians* and *Metaphyſicians*: in the firſt of which, the KNAVE is predominant; in the ſecond, the MADMAN. So that he has of either ſort always ready, and at hand, juſt as he wants them. But as *Madmen* are much eaſier dealt with than *Knaves*, he has prepared one common BEDLAM for the reception of them all. *For God forbid* (he ſays) *he ſhould be as uncharitable as Divines*, to think they deſerved a worſe place, *as blaſpheming in their ſenſes* [12]. Good man! How ſhall the clergy expreſs their thanks to him for ſo much Charity? Alas! he thinks not of it: his *modeſty* is ſtill greater than his charity: and he is only anxious not to be miſunderſtood; and leſt Divines ſhould take his honeſt freedom in dudgeon. Nay, he is even ready to fear, that it may poſſibly *procure him, in return, ſome eccleſiaſtical* BILLINSGATE; *to be called infidel, deiſt, and perhaps atheiſt. My reply* (ſays he) *to* SO ANGRY *Diſputants ſhould be* CALM, AND SUCH AS MIGHT TEACH CHARITY *to thoſe who preach it ſo much, and practiſe it ſo little* [13]. To ſay the truth, his Lord-

[12] Vol. iv. p. 464. [13] Vol. iv. p. 225.

ſhip

ſhip ſeems, like (JUSTICE SHALLOW in the Play) to be ſuſpicious of thoſe he had ſo well entertained. *Davy*, (ſays the Juſtice, ſpeaking of his Court-Gueſts) *be civil to theſe Knaves, for they will* BACK-BITE. *Not worſe than they are* BITTEN (replies Davy) *for they have marvelous foul linen.* Whether his Lordſhip found the *Prieſt's Surplice* in this condition, or whether he left it ſo, is not material. No marvel at it's evil plight, when it has been ſo long over-run with Vermin; ſuch as Toland, Chub, Morgan; and thoſe who have been ſince bred out of them.

The BILLINGSGATE, however, if we give but equal credit to what we *hear* of the Clergy, and to what we *ſee* of his Lordſhip, lies pretty nearly between them. Admit, they have both their ſhare: yet, I agree with the right Honourable Author, it becomes the reverend Clergy much leſs than it does him. They are *Diſputants*; he is an *Orator*. Their proper buſineſs is to *reaſon*; his proper buſineſs is to *rail*. While each confines himſelf to his province, every thing goes well. But ſhould they change weapons; ſhould the Orator attempt to reaſon,

and the Diſputant be provoked to rail, all would be out of order. I venture, on the authority of Quintilian, to reckon *railing* amongſt the ARTS of Eloquence. "CONVI-"TIIS implere VACUA cauſarum," ſays this able Rhetor. It is true he holds it to be of the leſs perfect kind—"eſt enim pror-"ſus CANINA ELOQUENTIA." But his Lordſhip might reaſonably think, that his *Dog-Eloquence*, was well enough fitted to their *Dog-Logic*. However, Quintilian would not overload this ſpecies of Eloquence, nor would I; tho' neither of us be much diſpoſed to extol it. He confeſſes there is yet a ranker kind. "Sed hæc mi-"nora ſunt ILLO VITIO ANIMI, quo MALE-"DICUS a MALEFICO non diſtat, niſi OCCA-"SIONE." "In which, ſays he, nothing but "*opportunity* is wanting to make the *evil-*"*ſpeaker* an *evil-doer*." But the *Miniſter of State* muſt join the *Orator* before this can be brought about: juſt as the DIVINE and ATHEIST muſt *conſpire* to make that ARTIFICIAL BLASPHEMY which, his Lordſhip aſſures us, has eaten into the very vitals of Religion.

But the mention of this CONSPIRACY reminds

minds me that it is now high time to give you ſome account of it.

Hitherto we have only the out-lines, or, at moſt the general air of this *Clerical Portrait*; all he could catch at the firſt ſitting. A horrid combination finiſhes the Picture: a CONFEDERACY BETWEEN DIVINES AND ATHEISTS, *to diſhonour and degrade the God of the univerſe.* This is the ſtriking feature; and ſo artificially diſpoſed, that, turn the Portrait what way you will, it has ſtill a *plotting*, which in his Lordſhip's juſtice, is little better than a *hanging look.*

A confederacy ſo monſtrous, ſo mad, ſo portentous, may perhaps ſtartle you at firſt. But don't be frightened. Take my word for it, it will come to nothing. It is a Treaty of his own making. And you have heard enough of his talents for this ſort of buſineſs. He could reconcile the moſt unnatural alliances to the delicacy of his *morals*; and the moſt ridiculous miſcarriages to the ſuperiority of his *Politics.* But a *confederacy between Divines and Atheiſts!* you ſay.—Was any thing ſo odious! What think you, I pray, of that

blind bargain he once drove between certain of King George's Proteſtant Subjects, and a Popiſh Pretender? How *that* came to nothing, he has not thought fit to tell us, in his curious account of that matter [18]. But, as to *this* confederacy, I may have an opportunity of ſhewing you, that, after all his pains to form it, he betrayed and diſſolved it, himſelf. At preſent, my buſineſs is only to ſhew you what he *ſays* of it.

" After pleading the cauſe of natural " and revealed Religion, I am to plead " the cauſe of God himſelf, againſt DI- " VINES AND ATHEISTS IN CONFEDERA- " CY [19].

" The conduct of Chriſtian Divines has " been ſo far from defending the Provi- " dence of God, that they have joined in " the clamour againſt it. Nothing has " hindered, even thoſe who pretend to be " his Meſſengers, his Embaſſadors, his " *Plenipotentiaries*, from renouncing their " allegiance to him, as they themſelves have

[18] See the whole Letter to Sir W. Windham.
[19] Vol. v. p. 305.

" the

" the FRONT TO AVOW, but the hypothe-
" ſis of a future ſtate. On this hypotheſis
" alone they inſiſt; and therefore if this
" will not ſerve their turn, God is diſowned
" by them, as effectually as if he was ſo, in
" terms [20]." " Divines, if not Atheiſts,
" yet are ABETTERS of Atheiſm [1]."

" That there were ſome men, who
" knew not God in all ages may be true:
" but the ſcandalous taſk of COMBATING
" HIS EXISTENCE under the mark of
" Theiſm, was reſerved for Metaphyſici-
" ans and Theologians [2]."

—" Divines are ſtill more to be blamed.
" A CONFEDERACY WITH ATHEISTS be-
" comes ill the profeſſors of Theiſm.
" No matter. They PERSIST, and have
" done their beſt, in concert with their
" allies, to DESTROY the belief of the good-
" neſs of God:—They endeavour to DE-
" STROY that of his goodneſs, which is a
" farther article of their Alliance [3]."

" The CONFEDERACY between Atheiſts
" and Divines appears to have been carried

[20] Vol. v. p. 487—8.
[2] Vol. v. p. 307.
[1] Vol. v. p. 485.
[3] Vol. v. p. 393.

" VERY FAR—Nay the Atheiſt will ap-
" pear, to that reaſon, to which they both
" appeal, more conſiſtent in his abſurdity
" than the Divine [4]." "Divines UPBRAID
" God's goodneſs, and CENSURE his Juſ-
" tice [5]."— " INJUSTICE is, in this life,
" aſcribed to God, by Divines [6]."

" The whole Tribe of Divines, like
" Wollaſton and Clarke, do, in effect RE-
" NOUNCE the God, whom you and I
" adore, as much as the rankeſt of the
" Atheiſtical Tribe. Your Prieſts and our
" Parſons will exclaim moſt pathetically,
" and RAIL OUTRAGEOUSLY at this aſſer-
" tion. But have a little patience, and I
" will prove it to their ſhame to be
" true [7]."

This is bold: but he knew there was no danger. Theſe *Prieſts* and *Parſons*, as he tells us, are mere ORTHODOX BULLIES, *who affect to triumph over men who employ but part of their ſtrength; tire them with* IMPERTINENT PARADOXES; *and provoke them by* UNJUST REFLECTIONS, *and often, by the* FOULEST LANGUAGE [8].

[4] Vol. v. p. 348—9.
[5] Vol. v. p. 417.
[6] Vol. v. p. 541.
[7] Vol. v. p. 485.
[8] Vol. iii. p. 273.

Now,

Now, on a man of his Lordſhip's profeſſed moderation, as well as *concealed ſtrength*, who, (as himſelf aſſures us) *ſets an example of candour* [9], theſe *orthodox Bullies* can have no hold. For, as *impudent* as they are, they can never *have the face* to call *this confederacy with Atheiſts* an IMPERTINENT PARADOX; this attempt *to decry God's providence, to blot out his attributes of goodneſs and juſtice, to combat his exiſtence, and finally to renounce him*, an UNJUST REFLECTION: or that the names, he gives them, of *madmen, fools, knaves, blaſphemers*, is FOUL LANGUAGE. But then you aſk, what ſort of eloquence is it, with which theſe *Orthodox Bullies* contrive to RAIL OUTRAGEOUSLY, and yet employ none of his Lordſhip's flowers of ſpeech? Now, tho' this ſpecimen of his *Lordſhip's* eloquence, was what I owed to his inimitable pen; I have not the ſame obligation, nor ſhall have the ſame complaiſance, to the *Divines*.

You will forgive me, I dare ſay, if I rather chuſe, to vindicate them from the horrid calumny of this imaginary confede-

[9] Vol. iv. p. 548.

racy; even tho' I go a little out of my way to do it. To ſay the truth, the charge is too ſerious to be paſſed over with the ſame lightneſs I am diſpoſed to treat the reſt of his Lordſhip's foul Language. Beſides, I ſhould be aſhamed to do nothing but trifle; tho' his Lordſhip (as his friend Pope predicted of him [10]) affords none but trifling occaſions.

Be pleaſed then to underſtand, that ATHEISM ever endeavoured to ſupport it ſelf, on a FACT, which has indeed all the certainty that the evidence of ſenſe can give it; namely *the irregular diſtribution of moral good and evil.*

—" Cum res hominum tanta caligine volvi
" Adſpicerem, *lætoſque diu florere nocentes,*
" *Vexarique pios*—— labefacta cadebat
" RELLIGIO,"—

was the common language of the impatient ſufferer. From hence the Atheiſt inferred, that things were without an intelligent Ruler; driven about by that Fate or For-

[10] IF EVER LORD B. TRIFLES, IT MUST BE WHEN HE TURNS A DIVINE. Pope's Works, Vol. IX. Letter 14.

tune,

tune, which firſt produced them. DIVINES oppoſed this *concluſion*: for they did not venture to be ſo paradoxical as, with his Lordſhip, to call in queſtion *the premiſſes*, a phenomenon which objected itſelf to all their ſenſes. They demonſtrated, STRICTLY DEMONSTRATED, the Being of a God, and his moral attributes. And then ſhewed, that if the whole of man's exiſtence were included in this life, the preſent diſtribution of moral good and evil would contradict that demonſtration. They, therefore, inferred, on their part, that the whole was not included in this life: but that man was reſerved for a future reckoning; in which, an equal diſtribution of rewards and puniſhments will amply vindicate the providence of a righteous Governor.

But *Atheiſts* were not the only enemies *Divines* had to do with. There was a ſet of men, who allowed an intelligent firſt Cauſe, endowed with thoſe moral attributes, which Divines had demonſtrated. And, on that account, called themſelves DEISTS. Yet they agreed ſo far with *Atheiſm*, as to confine the whole of man's exiſtence to the preſent life. Theſe, the Divines com-

combated in their turn; and with the ſame arms; but in an inverted order. In diſputing with the *Atheiſt*, the principle held in common, was *the preſent unequal diſtribution of Good and Evil.* So that to cut off their concluſion from it, of NO GOD, they proved his *being and attributes*: and from that proof inferred that the inequality would be ſet right. With the *Deiſt*, the common principle was *the being and attributes of God.* Therefore, to bring them to the allowance of a FUTURE STATE, they proved the preſent *unequal diſtribution* of good and evil; and from thence inferred, that there muſt be ſuch a State.

This is a plain and true account of the conteſt with ATHEISTS and DEISTS, in which the ſubject of *a future ſtate* came in queſtion: In either controverſy, it is *deduced from the moral attributes*: only with this difference, In the diſpute with Atheiſts, the demonſtration of thoſe attributes is *made*; in the diſpute with Deiſts it is *allowed.* The final purpoſe againſt Atheiſm is to prove the BEING AND ATTRIBUTES of God; againſt Deiſm to prove

a FU-

a FUTURE STATE: For neither *natural* nor *revealed* Religion can ſubſiſt without *believing that God* IS, *and that he is a* REWARDER of them *that ſeek him* [11]. Thus, we ſee, the *queſtion*, in either controverſy, being different; the *premiſſes*, by which they were to be proved, muſt needs be different. The difference is here explained: the premiſſes, in the argument with Atheiſts, were the *moral attributes*; the premiſſes in the argument with Deiſts, the *unequal diſtribution* of good and evil.

Who now would have expected to ſee calumny either thrive or riſe on ſo unpromiſing a ground: or a writer bold enough to tell the World, that this conduct of the DIVINES was a CONFEDERACY *with* ATHEISTS, *to decry God's providence; to blot out his attributes of goodneſs and juſtice; to combat his Government; and to deny his very exiſtence?* The RIGHT HONOURABLE Author does all this; and more;—He hopes to be believed. It is true, this is a fine believing age: Yet I hardly think he would have puſhed his confidence in it's credulity ſo far, had he himſelf

[11] St. Paul.

ſeen

ſeen his way clear before him. His Lordſhip is always ſublime, and therefore often cloudy; commonly at too great a diſtance to ſee into the detail of things, or to enter into their *minutiæ*: for which, indeed, he is perpetually felicitating his genius: So that, in his *general view* of Theologic matters, he had jumbled the two controverſies together; and, in the confuſion, has commodiouſly ſlipped in one fact for another. He, all the way, repreſents Divines as making A FUTURE STATE THE PROOF OF GOD'S MORAL ATTRIBUTES: Whereas, we now ſee, on the very face of the controverſy, that they make THE MORAL ATTRIBUTES A PROOF OF A FUTURE STATE. Let us conſider how the diſpute ſtands with *Atheiſts*. Theſe men draw their argument againſt a God, from the condition of the moral world: The Divine anſwers, by *demonſtrating* God's Being and Attributes: and, on that demonſtration, ſatisfies the objection. Conſider how it ſtands with the *Deiſt*. Here, God's Being and Attributes is a common principle: And on this ground the Divine ſtands, to deduce a *future ſtate* from

from the unequal diſtribution of things. How then was it poſſible, you will aſk, it ſhould be as his Lordſhip pretends; and is perpetually repeating; namely, that *Divines make a future ſtate the proof of God's moral attributes?* What tell you me, of *poſſible?* It was *neceſſary.* It was to ſupport his ſlander of a CONFEDERACY. There was no room to pretend that God's Being and attributes were made precarious, by proving a *future ſtate,* from them: But could he get it believed, that Divines proved the Being and attributes from a *future ſtate,* he would eaſily find credit with his *kind readers,* for the reſt.

Well then, the whole amount of his CHIMERICAL CONFEDERACY riſes to this, That *Divines and Atheiſts hold a principle in common*; but in common too with all the reſt of mankind; namely, that there are irregularities in the diſtribution of moral good and evil. His Lordſhip has been angry with all POLITICAL, as well as all RELIGIOUS Parties in their turns. Suppoſe he had taken it into his head to ornament a CRAFTSMAN with the detection of a *political confederacy* between the WHIGGS and JACOBITES, to dethrone KING

GEORGE; becauſe both denied that he reigned *jure divino:* Would not *Mother Oſborne* have ſmiled through all her gravity; and told him that the *Whiggs* urged this common principle to ſupport their Monarch's title againſt *indefeaſible hereditary right?* And is it not as evident that, in this pretended *anti-theological conſpiracy*, *Divines* employed the other common principle, to ſupport Religion againſt *Atheiſm and Deiſm!* But whatever his Lordſhip might think proper to diſguiſe in this reaſoning, there is one thing the moſt careleſs Reader will never overlook; which is, that, under all this pomp of words and ſolemnity of accuſation, lies lurking the pooreſt ſpecies of a Bigot's calumny; which too is perpetually betraying itſelf in the *meanneſs* of miſrepreſentation, and the *rancour* of abuſive language. For it is the Bigot's practice, from *one* principle held in common, to charge his Adverſary with *all* the follies or impieties of an obnoxious Party. This miſerable artifice had been now long hiſſed out of learned controverſy, when the noble Lord took it up; and, with true political ſkill, worked it into a

SHAM

SHAM PLOT; to make RELIGION diſtruſt it's beſt Friends, and take refuge in the FIRST PHILOSOPHY.

TINDAL and COLLINS were manly Adverſaries. They knew how to invent, to purſue, and to puſh an argument againſt Religion. But what does this noble Writer know — His friends will tell you. They admire him for his wit and eloquence. But his friends admire, where You and I ſee nothing but an inflamed ſpirit, and an inflated ſtyle.

But he has not yet done with the CHRISTIAN CLERGY. What remained behind was to collect together his ſcattered abuſe; and to pour it all at once on that venerable Body, with as unfeeling a hand, as unrelenting heart.

" Nothing more (ſays he) will be want-
" ing to anſwer all the ends of *artificial*
" *Theology*, than to aſſume that they who
" miniſter in holy things are the *Omrahs*,
" the *Vizirs* and the *Baſſas* of THIS MIGH-
" TY KING, whoſe commands they pub-
" liſh, interpret, and execute, or cauſe to
" be executed, rather than his EMBASSA-
" DORS: by aſſuming which latter charac-
" ters,

" ters, they ſeem to leſſen, over modeſtly,
" the dignity of their own order, and to
" raiſe that of the Laity too high: BUT I
" AM ASHAMED TO HAVE SAID SO MUCH
" ON THIS SUBJECT [12]."

This is, indeed, as he ſays of them, *over modeſt*. But they will be ready to reply in the words of the Poet,

" Let SHAME come when it will, we
" do not call it".

Beſides, after what has paſſed, I ſee nothing he need be *aſhamed of*; unleſs it be for ſtealing the paultry joke of *Embaſſadors* and *Plenipotentiaries* [13] from Lord Shaftſbury: which, if it but contribute to ſupport his character for *Wit*, I think, may be eaſily forgiven.

" Far be it from me (purſues this Right
" Honourable Perſon) and from every lover
" of Truth and common ſenſe, to wiſh that
" the race of Metaphyſicians and Caſuiſts
" ſhould increaſe, or ſo much as continue.
" But ſince there are, have been, and will

[12] Vol. v. p. 540—1.
[13] See p. 20. of this Letter.

" be

" be ſuch men in all ages, it is very rea-
" ſonable to wiſh that they may ſerve to
" the ſame good purpoſe that the HELOTES,
" the DRUNKEN SLAVES did at Sparta;
" and that their DELIRIUM, inſtead of im-
" poſing on others, and even infecting ma-
" ny, may be at length LAUGHED OUT of
" the world [10]." What pity is it his Lordſhip himſelf had not tried this expedient; (whoſe efficacy, other Lords of better temper, ſo kindly recommend and practiſe [11],) and employed his great *wit* to laugh the Clergy out of the world, rather than his *eloquence* to ſcold them out of it. He may rail, thro' all his figures, at *the impertinence of Logic, the futility of Metaphyſics, the fraud of Diſputation, and the blaſphemy of Divinity* [12]. Theſe are the arms of impotent, hyſterical Women when they want to have their will. After the long labours of a HOOKER, a STILLINGFLEET, a CUDWORTH, a SPENCER, a TILLOTSON, and a CLARKE, the Engliſh Clergy may anſwer his Lordſhip, in the words of *De Roſny*, as I think the ſtory goes, to ſome

[10] Vol. v. p. 446. [11] See their *Eſſays*, of paſt and preſent date, *in the freedom of wit and humour.*

[12] Vol. iv. p. 353.

old Ladies of the *League*, who, when HENRY IV. had got poſſeſſion of Paris, were one day very *eloquent* in their invectives againſt him, "Good ancient Gentlewomen, ſaid this rough old Soldier) ſpare your breath, and ſet your hearts at reſt, for MY MASTER is not a man to be ſcratched and ſcolded out of his KINGDOM."

But when, between his malice and his magic, he had transformed the CLERGY into *drunken ſlaves*; you muſt not think he would neglect to expoſe them to his NOBLE SPARTANS, in this condition. He hath not envied his Friends their entertainment: and no coſt is ſpared of laviſh expreſſion to ſet out theſe drunken revels. "The Choirs of birds (ſays he) "who whiſtle and ſing, or ſcream at "one another, or herds of beaſts who "bleat and low, or chatter and roar, at one "another, have juſt as much meaning and "communicate it as well --- Such is the "common converſation — Such, too, for "the moſt part, are all the public diſcourſes "that are held, and the ſolemn harangues "of the Pulpit [13]."

[13] Vol. iii. p. 422—3.

After ſo large a collection of his Lordſhip's flowers of ſpeech, you will diſpenſe with me from gathering up his looſer ends; ſuch as, *abſurdity*, *effronderie*, *knavery*, *folly*, *nonſenſe*, *delirium*, *frenzy*, *lunacy*, *downright madneſs*, *impiety*, *prophaneneſs*, *blaſphemy*, and *atheiſm*: which, like ſeed-pearl, are every where ſcattered over the embroidery of his eloquence.

But when I review this torrent of ribaldry, ſtrong enough to overlay an Oyſter-wench, I am apt, with indignation, to aſk,

An quæ
Turpia cerdoni, Voleſos Brutumq; decebunt?

but ready, however, in charity to ſuſpect, that even as his Lordſhip gave to BOWNCE, his friend's dog, the ſentiments of his maſter [14], ſo his Lordſhip's Secretary, who attended to two at once, his Lordſhip and his Lordſhip's PARROT, might unaware put

[14] *The world* (ſays his Lordſhip to Pope) *is as well fitted for* BOWNCE *as for* YOU, *with reſpect to phyſical nature*; *and with reſpect to* MORAL *nature*, BOWNCE *has little to do beyond hearkning to the* STILL WHISPERS, *the* SECRET SUGGESTIONS, *and the* SUDDEN INFLUENCES *of inſtinct*. Vol v. p. 467. This, the Reader ſees, is intended for a compliment

down to his Lord, what indeed belonged to the Favorite: who, however *eloquent* he might be, yet, we are told, was *no Philoſopher*.

The Coxcomb bird, ſo talkative and grave,
That from his cage cries *cuckold*, *whore* and *knave*,
Tho' many a paſſenger he rightly call,
We hold him NO PHILOSOPHER at all."

And I the rather ſuppoſe the Secretary to be here in fault, ſince his Lordſhip, in one place, ſeems to think, that ribaldry and ill language diſgrace the *animal implume bipes*, the *two-leg'd unfeathered Philoſopher*. For, ſpeaking of SPINOZA and HOBBES, he ſays, *Let it not be ſaid, they are men of* DEPRAVED UNDERSTANDINGS, AND DEPRAVED MORALS; THIS IS TO RAIL, NOT TO ARGUE.

To *rail*, then, when we ſhould *argue*, in his Lordſhip's opinion, is a fault. Unleſs

on the following ſtanza of his Friend's *Univerſal prayer*.

" Where I am right, THY GRACE IMPART,
" Still in the right to ſtay;
" Where I am wrong, O TEACH MY HEART
" To find that better way."

you

you will ſuppoſe, theſe two *atheiſts* were eſpecially favoured, becauſe not found in bad Company; wickedly CONFEDERATING with *Divines* and *Metaphyſicians*.

Seriouſly, as good men may be ſcandalized to find their Paſtors accuſed and convicted of *blaſphemy* and *prophaneneſs*; (for in his Lordſhip's proceſs the proof is always included in the charge) it will be but right to tell the plain truth: which is no more than this, that his Lordſhip is very apt to annex *new ideas*, to *old words*; and not very apt to give us notice of his handy-work. As in the caſe before us, Who would ſuſpect, that teaching, a *law of right reaſon, common to God and man*; and inforcing *man's obligation to imitate God*, were BLASPHEMY *and* PROPHANENESS? Yet ſuch they are; or his Lordſhip's word is not to be taken [16].

So then, as what has hitherto been eſteemed *Piety* is become *Blaſphemy*; we need not wonder if his Lordſhip ſhould turn

[16] *Divines have impudently and wickedly aſſumed that there is a Law of right reaſon common to God and man.* Vol. v. p. 77.—And again, TO PREACH UP THE OBLIGATION OF IMITATING GOD IS FALSE AND PROPHANE. Vol. v. p. 65.

old thread-bare blaſphemy, into a new habit of piety: and this may be as proper to be obſerved, leſt the ſame good men ſhould be too much ſhocked at the horror of what comes next: For now his Lordſhip falls, with the ſame ſpirit, or, if you will, with his uſual *wit and eloquence*, upon the TWO REVELATIONS and their FOUNDERS. And here, his *piety* pretends ſo much to the impulſe of conſcience, that you would ſuſpect he thought himſelf, like St. PAUL, under the malediction of a woe if he *preached not his new Goſpel.*

Of MOSES, he ſays, "It is impoſſible to "excuſe all the puerile, romantic, and ab-"ſurd circumſtances in the author of the "Book of Geneſis, which nothing could "produce but the habit of dealing in tri-"fling traditions, and a moſt profound ig-"norance. It is impoſſible to read what "he has writ on this ſubject without feel-"ing contempt for him as a philoſopher, "and horror as a Divine [17]."

"The PENTATEUCH has ſuch evident "marks of falſehood, as can be objected "to no other writings, except to pro-

[17] Vol. iii. p. 233.

"feſs'd

" fefs'd Romances, nor even always to
" them [18]."

" We may laugh at Don Quixote, for
" reading Romances till he believed them
" to be true hiſtories, and for quoting
" Archbiſhop Turpin with great ſolem-
" nity; but when Divines ſpeak of the
" PENTATEUCH as of an Authentic Hi-
" ſtory, and quote Moſes as ſolemnly as
" he did Turpin, are they much leſs mad
" than he was [19]?" *Don Quixote* is his Lordſhip's favorite ſimile; and comes as often over as either the *Aſs* or *Lion* in Homer. If I was not half aſhamed of uſing what has been ſo long hacknied both by Wits and Blockheads, I ſhould be tempted to borrow this ſimile; and with the leſs ſcruple, as his Lordſhip ſets me the example. What then, if I tried to apply it, for once? It ſhall ſuffer nothing in my hands; but be returned ſafe again to his Lordſhip, to joke with to the end of the chapter.

Whoever attentively conſiders his Lordſhip's ESSAYS, will, I dare ſay, be of my mind, That the much reading *his maſter* LOCKE, who was deeply engaged with

[18] Vol. iii. p. 271. [19] Vol. iii. p. 280.

School-divines and Metaphyſicians, had the ſame effect on his Lordſhip's temper, then in an advanced age, and under a bilious habit, that the reading books of Chivalry had on the prudent Gentleman of La Mancha. And, by his own confeſſion, *a man's head is ſoon turned by complex and abſtract ideas.* From henceforth the gigantic Forms of *Schoolmen* and the enchantments of *Metaphyſical Divines* got entire poſſeſſion of his Fancy. Conſider what you can make of the following remark, without ſuppoſing with me, that theſe *mormos* had made a very deep impreſſion. "*That* THEOLOGY, " ſays he, which pretends to deduce the " duties of man from ſpeculations con- " cerning the *moral attributes of God*, is to " be reckoned in the claſs with NATURAL " MAGIC [20]."

If you ſeek, I do not ſay for the *elegance*, but for the *common propriety* of this obſervation, any where out of his Lordſhip's own imagination, you will ſeek for it in vain. Yet, allow him but his *Theological Magicians*, and you ſee, their *theology* can be nothing elſe than *natural magic*.

[20] Vol. iv. p. 621.

So again, when he ſays — *Clarke ſhall not force me into Atheiſm; no nor Wollaſton neither*; What is this, but *Don Quixote*, up and down? dreadfully afraid that theſe Necromancers would, at laſt, force him into their enchanted caſtle of a FUTURE STATE; raiſed, as he tells us, between *Divines and Atheiſts in confederacy*.

Indeed, every Reader muſt have obſerved this unaccountable rage and horror whenever a DIVINE comes croſs his Lordſhip's fancy. One would think, they had ſerved him the trick, the Enchanters plaid Don Quixote; that they had run away with his *Library*, and walled up his *Study-door*. Moſt true it is, that not long before this immenſe Treaſure of the *firſt Philoſophy* was given to the world, certain of theſe wicked Magicians had turned it all into *fairie-favours*: And the public on it's appearance found nothing better proved than the truth of the old proverb, *Pro Theſauro, Carbones*.

Let us be thankful, however, for what we have. And indeed, if I was not perfectly ſatisfied that no man in his ſenſes could miſtake the value of this *new Money*, I ſhould make a ſcruple of laying ſo much of

it

it before him; especially the following *pieces*, which have an uncommon glow, as if they came hot from the place where they were minted.

" THE WHOLE SYSTEM OF THE LAW
" OF MOSES, like the whole system of his
" conduct, WAS FOUNDED ON MURDER[1].

" The *Jews* blended together, at once,
" in the moral character of God, injustice,
" cruelty, and partiality. They made him
" an object of terror more than of awe
" and reverence; and their Religion was
" a System of the RANKEST SUPERSTI-
" TION[2]."

" The JEWS with more inconsistency,
" and not less profanation, than the Pa-
" gans, dressed up the one supreme Being
" in all the rags of humanity; which
" composed a kind of motley Character,
" such as foolish Superstition, and mad
" Enthusiasm alone could ascribe to him;
" and such as no man who believes him
" an all-perfect being can hear without
" horror[3]."

" The Jews give such notions of the su-
" preme Being as no People on earth, but

[1] Vol. v. p. 183. [2] Vol. v. p. 531.
[3] Vol. v. p. 529.

" this

" this, would have aſcribed, I do not ſay
" to God, but to the worſt of thoſe mon-
" ſters, who are ſuffered or ſent by God,
" for a ſhort time, to puniſh the iniquity
" of men [4]."

From MOSES and JUDAISM, his Lordſhip deſcends to PAUL and CHRISTIANITY. Let us ſee whether he gives Them better quarter.

" CHRISTIANITY abrogated the *Law*,
" and confirmed the *hiſtory of Moſes*; from
" the times, at leaſt, when St. PAUL un-
" dertook, like a true cabaliſtical Archi-
" tect, with the help of type, and figure,
" to raiſe a new Syſtem of religion on the
" old foundations [5]." " The Goſpel of
" CHRIST is one thing; the Goſpel of St.
" PAUL another [6]." " He preached a
" Goſpel in contradiction to CHRIST's, and
" directly repugnant to it [7]."

On this account, I ſuppoſe, it was, that he dignifies PAUL, with the elegant appellation of the LEATHER-DRESSING PONTIFF. But the immediate occaſion of his conferring this new title on him, was particularly happy. His Lordſhip was on a favorite topic, he was abuſing the firſt Meſſenger;

[4] Vol. v. p. 515.
[5] Vol. iii. p. 288.
[6] Vol. iv. p. 313.
[7] Vol. iv. p. 326—7.

of

of the Goſpel, for their claim to maintenance. He was conſcious, PAUL came not within his cenſure. So that, leſt this ſhould give the Apoſtle too much credit; he informs the reader, in his polite way [8], that he had a *trade*, and could ſhift for himſelf. For it ſeems, nothing but downright ſtarving will acquit the Apoſtles of theft and extortion, before his Lordſhip's Tribunal.

" JESUS (in his opinion) had no inten-
" tion of ſpreading his Religion further
" than amongſt the *Jews*; but PAUL,
" bred at the feet of Gamaliel, ſaw fur-
" ther than that poor ignorant fiſherman
" Peter." The ſenſe requires you ſhould read, *that poor ignorant Carpenter Jeſus*: and ſo without doubt his Lordſhip deſigned his compliment. Well, but what did PAUL ſee further? It was this, " That the
" contempt and averſion in which both
" the nation and the Religion of the Jews
" were held by the reſt of mankind,
" would make it much more eaſy to con-
" vert the Gentiles at once to Chriſtianity,
" than to make them Jews firſt, in order
" to make them Chriſtians afterwards [9]."

[8] Vol. iv. p. 423. [9] Vol. iv. p. 306.

For

For it ſeems—" TO DISSEMBLE was a " fundamental principle of apoſtolical con- " duct. PAUL practiſed it. We have his " own word for this; and he boaſts of " it [10]." His Lordſhip lets us know, that *Paul* had aſſurance enough to do any thing. For ſpeaking of the Apoſtle's famous argument *ad modeſtiam—Nay, but, O man, who art thou that replieſt againſt God?* &c. [11]. He ſays " There is ſomething " ſo IMPUDENT, as well as abſurd in this " proceeding, that, common as it is, one " can ſee no example of it without ſur- " priſe [12]."

" Can he be leſs than mad, ſays his " Lordſhip, who boaſts a revelation ſu- " per-added to reaſon, to ſupply the de- " fects of it, and who ſuper-adds rea- " ſon to revelation to ſupply the defects " of this too, at the ſame time? This is " madneſs or there is no ſuch thing inci- " dent to our nature. And into this kind " of madneſs, ST. PAUL, profound in ca- " baliſtical learning, hath fallen [13]." And yet, as mad as it is, all States and Societies have matched it, when they *ſuper-*

[10] Vol. iv. p. 306—7. [11] Rom. ix. 20.
[12] Vol. iii. p. 307. [13] Vol. iv. p. 172.

added

added civil Laws, to natural conſcience or Religion, *to ſupply the defects of it*; *and ſuperadded* natural conſcience or Religion to Civil Laws, *to ſupply the defects of thoſe too, at the ſame time*. But more of this in it's place.

" St. PAUL carried into the Apoſtle-
" ſhip a great deal of that ASSUMING
" AIR, which is apt to accompany much
" learning, *or the opinion of it*—a great
" profuſion of words, and of involved
" and unconnected diſcourſe, even on
" thoſe ſubjects which required to be moſt
" clearly and diſtinctly developed. — He
" was a *looſe paraphraſer, a Cabaliſtical*
" *Commentator*, as much, *at leaſt*, as any
" ancient or modern Rabbin [14]." " St.
" PAUL's ſyſtem of Religion, is an *intri-*
" *cate and dark Syſtem, with, here and*
" *there, an intelligible phraſe, that caſts no*
" *light on the reſt, but is rather loſt in the*
" *gloom of the whole* [15]."--" Having ſaid
" ſo much of the *intelligibility of Paul's*
" *Goſpel*, TRUTH authoriſes me to add,
" that where it is intelligible, it is of-
" ten ABSURD, or PROPHANE, or TRI-

[14] Vol. iv. p. 326—7. [15] Vol. iv. p. 328.

" FLING."

" FLING [16]."—" PAUL taught *predeſti-*
" *nation* and UNLIMITED PASSIVE OBEDI-
" ENCE: the one abſurd, the other both
" abſurd and IMPIOUS [17]."

Was it poſſible to laugh, in the midſt of theſe horrors, what mortal could now forbear. *Unlimited paſſive obedience*, quoth he! The noble Lord had been ſo long accuſtomed to the cant of his Faction, which made St. Paul the preacher of I cannot tell what nonſenſe under that name, that he ſeems now in good earneſt to believe he was ſo. A juſt judgment on the Politician; to come at laſt, to give credit to his own Flams. However, in this inſtance, at leaſt, one would hope St. Paul might have been ſpared, if it were only for old-acquaintance-ſake; and the hard ſervice they had put the LEATHER-DRESSING PONTIFF upon. But it is bad truſting, we ſee, to the gratitude of Stateſmen. Happy for us, PAUL has yet an able Defender; who will never be wanting in what he owes to gratitude and honour. I beg leave to ſay thus much, becauſe as *Clarke* and *Wollaſton* found the worſe treatment for being the favourite

[16] Id. ib. [17] Vol. iv. p. 510.

Philo-

Philoſophers of Q. C. (as is well known to thoſe who were in the ſecret either of his paſſions or his party) ſo St. *Paul*, I am perſuaded, did not fare the better for being patronized by his Lordſhip's illuſtrious Friend.

"CHRISTIANITY (ſays his Lordſhip) "became FANATICISM in the FIRST pro-"feſſors of it. Men corrupted it by AR-"TIFICIAL THEOLOGY. And ſome will "be apt to think, that the firſt of theſe "men was PAUL — Divines will be FU-"RIOUS to hear SUCH LANGUAGE [18]."

Alas! No. He miſtakes the mood, in which his works chanced to find them. They laugh at his vanity; and pity the FURY that inſpired SUCH LANGUAGE. And he gives them ample exerciſe for all their pity: for having done with PAUL, he turns now to rail with the ſame virulence againſt CHRIST himſelf.

"The truth is, CHRISTIANITY pre-"ſerved, in many reſpects, a ſtrong tang of "the ſpirit of Judaiſm. The ſupreme Be-"ing took a milder appearance; his fa-"vour was confined no longer to one peo-"ple. The MESSIAH came and redeemed

[18] Vol. v. p. 275.

"fallen

" fallen Man. CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY
" discovers in this mysterious proceeding
" the love of God to Man; his infinite
" justice and goodness. BUT REASON
" will discover the fantastical, confused
" and inconsistent notions of Jewish Theo-
" logy, latent in it; and applied to ano-
" ther system of Religion. *This love will*
" *appear partiality*; *this justice will appear*
" *injustice*; *this goodness will appear cruelty*.
" On the whole, the moral character im-
" puted to the supreme Being by Christian
" Theology differs little from that imputed
" to him by the Jewish. The difference is
" rather apparent than real [19]." " The
" scene of Christianity has been ALWAYS a
" scene of dissention, of hatred, of perse-
" cution, and of BLOOD [20]."

Speaking of CHRIST's *Sermon on the Mount*, his Lordship says, — " Some [of
" the precepts] are directed to the *Jews*
" only, and some more immediately to
" the Disciples of Christ. The second
" sort seem fit enough for a *religious Sect*;
" but are by no means practicable in the
" general Society of Mankind. *Considered*
" *as general duties they are impracticable*,

[19] Vol. v. p. 532. [20] Vol. iv. p. 511.

" *inconſiſtent with* NATURAL INSTINCT,
" *as well as* LAW, *and* QUITE DESTRUC-
" TIVE OF SOCIETY [1]."

" The CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY has de-
" rived from the *Jewiſh*, a prophane li-
" cence, which *makes men blaſpheme without*
" *knowing they blaſpheme, and makes their*
" *very devotion impious* [2]."

" I would ſooner be reputed, nay I would
" ſooner be a Pagan, than a Chriſtian, or an
" Atheiſt than a Theiſt, if to be one or
" the other it was neceſſary to believe ſuch
" ABSURDITIES as theſe; which, however
" diſguiſed and ſoftened by a *certain cant*
" *of expreſſion*, are directly PROPHANE;
" and indirectly, or by conſequence at leaſt,
" *blaſphemous* [3]."

" ALL THE BEDLAMS OF THE WORLD
" cannot match the abſurdities that have
" been propagated by Chriſtians, whether
" heretics or orthodox, concerning the
" *making and governing of the world by the*
" *miniſtration of inferior Beings*: Beings
" not eternal, but produced in time by *ema-*
" *nation, or ſome other inconceivable manner*
" *of generation* [4]."

[1] Vol. iv. p. 299, 300.
[2] Vol. v. p. 519.
[3] Vol. iv. p. 34.
[4] Vol. iv. p. 72.

" We

" We cannot believe the SCRIRTURES
" to be God's *word*, tho' we know the
" phyſical and moral Syſtem are his *Work*,
" while we find in them ſuch repugnancies
" to the Nature of an all-perfect Being;
" not myſteries, but abſurdities; not things
" incomprehenſible, but things that imply
" manifeſtly contradiction with his Na-
" ture [5]."

In a word, he tells us, that " THE RE-
" LIGION OF NATURE HAS BEEN TURNED
" ALMOST INTO BLASPHEMY BY REVE-
" LATION [6]." " To believe (ſays he)
" that *Jeſus was the Meſſiah* is ſaid by
" ſome [meaning his *Maſter Locke*] to
" be the *unum neceſſarium* of FAITH,
" but TO OBSBRVE THE LAW OF NATURE
" IS THE UNUM NECESSARIUM OF DU-
" TY [7]."

But now having expoſed MOSES, CHRIST, and PAUL; decried the falſhood of the TWO REVELATIONS; and ridiculed the abſurdity of ſacred SCRIPTURE; he ſhews us, in mere charity, after the example of the WISE ALPHONSUS, how either ſyſtem might have been mended, had his

[5] Vol. iii. p. 306, 7. [6] Vol. iii. p. 498.
[7] Vol. iv. p. 410.

Lordſhip been conſulted; while, like the WISE ALPHONSUS, he believes juſt as much of God's *Word*, as the Other did of his *Works*.

Firſt, he hints, how the LAW might have been better planned. "God pur-
"chaſed the obedience of the *Jewiſh* Peo-
"ple by a mercenary bargain. It was
"ill kept on their part. And the Law,
"with all it's ſanctions, was continually
"violated; ſometimes rejected; and had,
"in no degree, a force ſufficient to main-
"tain itſelf in obſervation and reverence.
"Now, one of the moſt conceivable per-
"fections of a Law is, that it be made with
"ſuch a foreſight of all poſſible accidents,
"and with ſuch proviſions for the due exe-
"cution of it, in all caſes, that the *Law*
"may be effectual to govern and direct
"theſe accidents, inſtead of lying at the
"mercy of them. — Another the moſt
"conceivable perfection of a *Law* conſiſts
"in the clearneſs and preciſion of its terms.
"— Theſe will be found, no doubt, and
"ought to be expected, when God is the
"Legiſlator [8]."

[8] Vol. iii. p. 292,3.

He

He next ſhews us, how he could have improved the GOSPEL, had he been of God's privy-counſel. "Had the doctrine "of future rewards and puniſhments been "taught by CHRISTIANITY in terms "*more general and leſs deſcriptive*; had "the puniſhments been repreſented, for "inſtance, like the rewards, to be, ſim-"ply, ſuch *as eye never ſaw, nor ear* "*heard, nor the heart of man could conceive*, "it might have been maintained in credit, "and had an univerſal and real influence "perhaps, to the great advantage of reli-"gion [9]."

An inattentive Reader may be ſurprized, perhaps, at this wantonneſs of his Lordſhip's pen; that when he had given it as his fixed opinion, that all which the World hath hitherto called *Religion*, is a public miſchief; and that a *future State* is an abſurd fable; he ſhould, with great formality, deliver in a plan which would have given *credit* and *real efficacy* to nonſenſe and impiety. But we muſt conſider, He had been ſo long playing the PHILOSOPHER, that he had reaſon to apprehend we might forget the other part of his ſub-

[9] Vol. v. p. 542.

lime Character, the LEGISLATOR. He therefore deemed it expedient to give us a ſlight caſt of his office, in rectifying the blunders of MOSES and JESUS CHRIST.

With regard to MOSES and his *Law*, I have ſo much to ſay to his Lordſhip, that I ſhall reſerve it for an after-reckoning. The other is but a ſmall matter, and may be ſettled here.

I ſuſpect then, our *Legiſlator* in this remark concerning Jeſus's manner of revealing a *future ſtate*, did not ſufficiently attend to the nature of the human mind, nor to the genius of the Goſpel. He would have, we ſee, the account of *future puniſhments as general*, and *as little deſcripti-ve*, as that of *future rewards*. He ſeems to think the latter managed well: But this propriety, he meaſures from the imaginary impropriety of the other: he appears to have no idea of any excellency it has in itſelf. We ſhall endeavour therefore to explain *why* this method of repreſenting *future rewards* was right: By which it will appear, that the other, of repreſenting *future puniſhments*, was not wrong.

To grow *particular* and *deſcriptive*, whether of future rewards, or future puniſh-

punishments, men must borrow their images from *material and corporeal* things; because they have no faculties of sensation proper to comprehend ideas taken from things *Spiritual*. Now when a follower of Christ is so far advanced as to have his Faith work by *hope*, his sentiments grow refined, his ideas purify, and he is rising apace towards that perfection which the Gospel encourages him to aspire after. But while *fear of punishment* chiefly operates upon him, he is yet in the lowest stage of probation; his imagination is gross, and his appetites sensual. Is it not evident, then, that a *descriptive* Heaven of delights would be ill suited to that purity and elevation of mind, solely fixed by *hope*, on happiness; and as evident that a *general undefined* denunciation of Hell would not have force enough to make the necessary impression on a sensual fancy agitated by *fear*? Let not his Lordship's admirers, therefore, be offended, if we believe that, in this point, the Author of our Salvation went at least one step beyond their Master, in *true Politics*.

To proceed. From vilifying BOTH RELIGIONS, and their FOUNDERS, his Lord-

ſhip comes, at length, to rail againſt the GOD of *both Religions*. And with this I ſhall cloſe the horrid Scene.

" IF WE BELIEVE IN MOSES, AND HIS " GOD, WE CANNOT BELIEVE IN THAT " GOD WHOM OUR REASON SHEWS US [10]. " CAN ANY MAN PRESUME TO SAY " THAT THE GOD OF MOSES, OR THE " GOD OF PAUL, IS THE TRUE GOD? " The God of MOSES is partial, unjuſt, " and cruel; delights in blood, commands " aſſaſſinations, maſſacres, and even exter- " minations of people. The God of " PAUL elects ſome of his creatures to " ſalvation, and predeſtinates others to " deſtruction, even in the womb of their " mothers. And, indeed, if there was " not a Being INFINITELY MORE PER- " FECT than theſe, there would be no God " at all, nor any true Religion in the " world [11]."

Who, that had heard this dreadful language, without knowing from what quarter it came, but would ſtrait have called to mind the words of the Satyriſt?

[10] Vol. iii. p. 307. [11] Vol. v. p. 567.

" Not

"Not Danté, dreaming all th' infernal State,
"Beheld ſuch ſcenes of envy, ſin, and hate.

But when we underſtand them to be the ejaculations of this Noble Philoſopher, the Confeſſor of Truth, the Advocate of Virtue, and the Reſtorer of baniſhed Nature; employed, as he himſelf tells us, or rather *ſet apart*, TO PLEAD THE CAUSE OF GOD HIMSELF AGAINST DIVINES AND ATHEISTS IN CONFEDERACY [12]; when we conſider all this, I ſay, What are we to think, but that they are the pious breathings of an over-heated zeal: and tho' expreſſed in no conſecrated terms; indeed, ſuch as had been much worn in the ſervice of the CRAFTS-MAN; yet when new-ſet in his Lordſhip's immortal Panoply of the FIRST PHILOSOPHY, they may now prove as uſeful, to advance the *fear of God*, as before, to promote the *honour of the King*.

It is in HATE as in LOVE; hard to ſeparate the *carnal* from the *divine* ſpecies; or rather they are but different ebullitions of the ſame ſpecies. Hence it is, that the melting ſtrains of the *Myſtic*, the *Methodiſt*, and the *Moravian*, ſo often ſmell of the

[12] Vol. v. p. 305.

STEWS;

STEWS; and hence, by parity of reaſon, the thunder of his Lordſhip's eloquence may naturally re-echo, as it were, from BILLINSGATE.

But theſe things make You ſerious: and You aſk, "Who, that hath ever heard Lord Bolingbroke's Story, would have ſuſpected, that his GOD and his COUNTRY lay ſo near his heart? His *Political* and *Philoſophic* Writings, ſay you, are full of *Lamentations*; where, like another Jeremy, he bewails the diſhonours which wicked PRIESTS, and wicked POLITICIANS, have brought both upon Church and State: And, as is common in extreme fondneſs for our favourite Objects, he ſuffers himſelf to be alarmed with ſomething leſs than panic terrors. He is afraid the *Whigs* will bring in the *Pretender*; and apprehends, the *engliſh Clergy* have made large ſteps to introduce *Atheiſm*."

I know what You drive at. You would fain apply to his right honourable Perſon, the old trite aphoriſm, *That wicked principles ſpring out of a wicked life*. But what ſays another noble Peer to this? "Fain would "the Bigot, in conſequence of his *moral* "*maxims*, and *political eſtabliſhments*, con-

"found

" found *licentiouſneſs in morals* with *liberty*
" *of thought* and action; and make the *li-*
" *bertine*, who has the LEAST MASTERY
" OF HIMSELF, reſemble his direct oppo-
" ſite [13]."

It may be ſo, you will ſay. But Lord Bolingbroke ſurely could never object to the imputation which *bad morals* caſt upon a *Teacher of Truth*. He, who ſees it ſo clearly, and preſſes it ſo charitably, upon the whole body of the *Chriſtian Clergy*.

" How (ſays his Lordſhip) can the
" CLERGY of your Church or of ours,
" pretend that they contribute now, or E-
" VER DID CONTRIBUTE, to the reforma-
" tion of mankind? No age can be pointed
" out, wherein ALL THE VICES, that Tully
" imputes to moſt of the heathen Philoſo-
" phers, did not prevail AMONGST MOST
" of the Chriſtian Divines with great cir-
" cumſtances of aggravation. They have
" not only ALL THE VICES incident to
" human nature in common with other
" men, but they have had the peculiar
" Vices of their Order. I WILL SAY
" BOLDLY, they are, in general, much

[13] *Characteriſtics*, Vol. iii. Miſc. 5. Chap. 3.

fitter

" fitter to hinder, by their EXAMPLE,
" than to promote by their DOCTRINE, the
" Advancement of Religion, natural or
" revealed."

We have, it is true, been favoured with very ample accounts of the immoral conduct both of antient Philoſophers and Modern Clergymen; and theſe, even by members of their own reſpective Bodies.

FREE-THINKERS have been more baſhful: and, by their reſerve and modeſty on this head, one might have taken them for Saints, had it not been for the *Confeſſions* of one of them, the famous CARDAN; who, like another St. *Auſtin*, ſeems ſworn to leave nothing behind him in the inkhorn. The account he gives of himſelf deſerves tranſcribing for more reaſons than one. —— " In diem viven-
" tem, nugacem, religionis contempto-
" rem, illatæ injuriæ memorem, invi-
" dum, triſtem, inſidiatorem, proditorem,
" ſuorum oſorem, turpi libidini dedi-
" tum, ſolitarium, inamœnum, auſterum,
" obſcœnum, laſcivum, maledicum, vari-
" um, ancipitem, impurum, calumnia-
" torem [14] *&c.*" This was fair deal-

[14] *De vita ſua.*

ing:

ing: and he who was ſo *free* with himſelf, might be pardoned if he ſpared no body elſe. But men don't uſe to be wanton on ſo nice a ſubject. *Freethinkers* have *more maſtery of themſelves*, ſays the noble Author of the *Characteriſtics*. And therefore whenever we ſee it done, let us conclude it to be for ſome great purpoſe; as, in emulation of the Chriſtian Confeſſors, who, to diſplay the powers of *Grace*, did not ſcruple to tell the world with great ſimplicity what they were by *Nature*; ſo Cardan to ſhew us, that the FIRST PHILOSOPHY is as efficacious in all great changes, has fairly told us how well befriended he had been by his *Stars*. However, let his deſign be what it will in preſenting us with this picture of his amiable turn of mind, we are much beholden to him for ſetting the example. Tho', like all other good examples, it may poſſibly end where it begun; and the *firſt Philoſophy* wait with patience for ſome leſs incommodious way of recommendation. And indeed, while Infidelity, which is the *cure*, is ſo unjuſtly ſuppoſed the *cauſe* of theſe Peccadillos, we need not wonder our Philoſophers ſhould be ſoon at liberty, and as ſoon diſpoſed, to

turn their view from their own morals, upon the morals of the Clergy: and *ſay boldly*, with his Lordſhip, that *the order in general is much fitter to hinder by their* EXAMPLE, *than to promote by their* DOCTRINE, *the advancement of Religion.*

What ſhall we ſay then? May it not be as well to leave the *examples*, of both, to ſhift for themſelves; and to conſider only their *Doctrines?* I think it is: And will therefore proceed from his Lordſhip's TEMPER, to his PRINCIPLES. But this muſt be the ſubject of another Letter.

I am, *&c.*

LET-

LETTER II.

IT has been obſerved, that rare and extraordinary bleſſings, whether civil or religious, ſeldom come till hope grows deſperate, and long expectation be quite wearied out. Then it is, the ſuperior Genius beſtirs himſelf, the criſis approaches, a *coup d'éclat* is ſtruck, and the admiring world is taken in by ſurpriſe.

The caſe before us is an illuſtrious inſtance. Never was mankind in ſo deplorable a way as when his Lordſhip arrived; from what other Syſtem is not yet diſcovered: tho' his tuneful Friend was very poſitive he belonged not to this: Inſomuch, that when the laſt Comet appeared, and came pretty near the Earth, he uſed to tell his acquaintance, he ſhould not be ſurprized if in the event it proved, that it was ſent only to convey his Lordſhip home again; juſt as a Stage-coach ſtops at your door to take up a Paſſenger. Be this as it will: bad indeed was our condition when his Lordſhip's arrived. — what ſhall I ſay, *to be a light to thoſe who ſat in darkneſs?* No, this is the work of

meaner

meaner Miſſionaries; but, to RESTORE MANKIND TO THEIR SENSES.

For his Lordſhip, in his account of the general DELIRIUM which had ſeized the *Clergy*, had given us but a *ſpecimen* of the human condition: the MADNESS was indeed UNIVERSAL. Inſomuch, that (as he well expreſſes it) ALL THE BEDLAMS OF THE WORLD [1] were not ſufficient for theſe things. And, to confeſs the truth, when was it, that the viſions of an *over-heated and diſordered imagination*, ſuch as, belief in the *moral Attributes of God, the immortality of the Soul, a particular Providence, and a future State*, did not infect all times and places?

"ALL EUROPE (ſays his Lordſhip) GREW "DELIRIOUS [2]. Chriſtianity was left to "ſhift for itſelf in the midſt of a FRANTIC "WORLD [3]." And again, "OUR WORLD "ſeems to be, in many reſpects, THE BEDLAM OF EVERY OTHER SYSTEM OF INTELLIGENT CREATURES: and, with this "unlucky circumſtance, that they who are "*moſt mad* govern, in things of the greateſt "moment, them who are *leaſt ſo* [4]."

[1] Vol. iv. p. 72.
[2] Vol. iv. p. 377.
[3] Vol. iv. p. 353.
[4] Vol. iv. p. 316.

By

By what is here dropt in the concluſion, you underſtand why his Lordſhip choſe to make the Clergy lead up the *Brawls*; and the *Leather-dreſſing Pontiff* himſelf to preſide in this mad dance, as Maſter of the Revels.

But to find all mankind mad, is more, perhaps, than you expected. What then? Is the madneſs leſs real for being univerſal? His Lordſhip's *Logic* ſays otherwiſe. And his Lordſhip's *Logic*, I can aſſure you, is not like his Theology, of yeſterday; it comes of great Kindred. *Oliver Cromwell's* Porter had long ago enobled this very *Syllogiſm*. *I ſee plainly* (ſays this Sage) *that either I or all the world beſides are mad: but as it is not I, it muſt needs be they.* And he was then advancing with large ſtrides, as one may ſay, towards the *firſt Philoſophy*; being indeed, at that time, a kind of *Rector magnificus* in the Engliſh College of Bethlehem.

Was it then, you will aſk, ſome ſtrange and evil diſpoſition of the ſtars, that occaſioned this univerſal inſanity? So, indeed, it is reported [5]. The WORLD, it ſeems, like the men of *Abdera* [6], had ſeen a

[5] Vid. *D. N. J. C. geneſeos thema*, inter Cardani Op.

[6] *See Lucian's true hiſtory.*

Tragedy repreſented to them in a very hot day: the ſubject of which left ſo ſtrong an impreſſion on their fancies, that they all thought themſelves concerned in the cataſtrophe. Some ran about from country to country, to tell their ſtory; and the reſt have been ever ſince rehearſing and celebrating thoſe affecting ſcenes, at home; till LORD BOLINGBROKE, like another HIPPOCRATES, came to their relief: and having firſt well phyſicked them of their Faith and their Viſions, brought them to themſelves, by applying to their hurt imaginations, the ſovereign Reſtorative of his FIRST PHILOSOPHY. Of which, I am now, as I promiſed, to give you ſome account.

But to ſee this extraordinary man in a juſt light, it will be proper to ſhew what *Man* was before him. A RELIGIOUS ANIMAL he is on all hands allowed to be. And till the coming of this FIRST PHILOSOPHY, *Religion* was ever underſtood to riſe on that wide baſis, on which PAUL, tho' a *fanatical Knave*, had the *art* to place it; that "He who cometh to God muſt believe "that he IS: and that he is a REWARDER "of them who diligently ſeek him [7]."

[7] Heb. xi. 6.

FOR

For till the arrival of his Lordſhip, men who ſuppoſed the infinite *goodneſs and juſtice* of God to be as demonſtrable as his infinite *power and wiſdom*, could not but conclude from his *moral attributes*, that he REWARDED, as well as from his *natural attributes*, that he CREATED.

On the more complex notion, therefore, of a MORAL GOVERNOR, all mankind ſuppoſed RELIGION to ariſe; and NATURALISM, the Ape of Religion, from the ſimpler notion of a PHYSICAL PRESERVER: which, however, they were ready to diſtinguiſh, on the other hand, from the *Unnaturaliſm* (if we may ſo term it) of *ranker Atheiſm*.

RELIGION, therefore, ſtands, and muſt, I think, for ever ſtand, on thoſe two immoveable principles of PRESERVER and REWARDER, in conjunction.

The *length* or *ſhortneſs* of human exiſtence was not primarily in the idea of Religion, not even in the complete idea of it, as delivered in ST. PAUL's general definition. "The Religioniſt, ſays he, muſt be-
"lieve that God *is*, and that he *rewards*."

But when it came to be ſeen, that he was not always a *Rewarder* here, men con-

cluded this life not to be the whole of their exiſtence. And thus a FUTURE STATE was brought into Religion; and from thenceforth became a neceſſary part of it.

To explain my meaning, if ſo clear a thing needs explanation. GOD, under the *phyſical* idea of *Preſerver* and Creator appears uniform, regular, and inſtant to his *Creatures*: Under the *moral* idea of *Rewarder* and Governor, he ſeems frequently to be withdrawn from his *Servants*. For tho' in the moral diſpenſations of things here, good and evil be often proportioned to deſert; yet often, too, they are not ſo exactly adjuſted. The Antient Religioniſt, therefore, confiding in his demonſtration of the *moral* as well as the *natural* attributes of the Deity, concluded, That the *preſent* was not the only ſtate ordained for man; but that in ſome other life, theſe irregularities would be ſet right. Hence a FUTURE STATE became in all ages and countries (except one, where the moral adminiſtration of providence was different) inſeparable from, and eſſential to, the various Religions of mankind. Even the mere Vulgar, who did not reach the force of this demonſtration, yet ſeeing the

marks

marks of moral Government, amidſt the frequent interruptions of it, embraced the doctrine of a *future State* with the ſame confidence as the Learned. For plain Nature had inſtructed them to reaſon thus, — If all were *regular*, nothing needed to be ſet right: and if all were *irregular*, there was no one to ſet things right.

Such was the ANTIENT RELIGION OF NATURE: To which, modern Divines have generally agreed to give the name of THEISM, when profeſſed by thoſe who never heard of REVELATION; and the name of DEISM, when profeſſed by thoſe who would never give credit to it.

In this State our noble Philoſopher found the *religious World*; or, more properly, this was the language he heard reſounding from one end of the earth to the other: But it was a language, he tells us, he did not underſtand. It was to his ears, *like the choirs of birds, who whiſtle and ſing, or ſcream, at one another: or the herds of beaſts, who bleat and low, or chatter and roar, at one another.* He rejects it, therefore in the lump, as one inarticulate din of ENTHUSIASM and ABSURDITY; the product of *pride* and *ignorance*; and, with

greater of his own, erects the FIRST PHILOSOPHY on it's ruins.

He permits us to believe, that an intelligent Cauſe made the world; and governs it, by his *phyſical* and *general* Laws; not by *moral* or *particular*.

He bids us to underſtand, that this World was no more made for man than for every animal beſides: nor was man made for any other world, nor conſequently, (as Divines have dreamt) for happineſs.

That, by the *arbitrary conſtitution* of things in the human ſyſtem (which may have a contrary diſpoſition in other ſyſtems) Virtue promotes happineſs and Vice brings on miſery.

That THIS CONSTITUTION, together with the coactivity of CIVIL LAWS, contain all the rewards and puniſhments attendant on Virtue and on Vice.

That prayer, ſupplication, and every other office of Religion in uſe amongſt men, to implore good, and to deprecate evil, are fooliſh and fanatical: for that all religious duty is comprized in *ſubmiſſion to the eſtabliſhed order of things*.

He ſums up his ſyſtem in theſe words.

" A ſelf-exiſtent being the firſt cauſe of all

" things,

" things, infinitely POWERFUL and infi-
" nitely WISE, is the God of natural Theo-
" logy. And the whole ſyſtem of natural
" Religion reſts on it, and requires NO
" BROADER FOUNDATION [8]." That is, it is enough for *him who cometh* to this new Religion, *to believe that God* IS; and not that he is a REWARDER *of them who ſeek him.* And again, " When men have pro-
" ved the exiſtence of an all-perfect being,
" the Creator and Governor of the Uni-
" verſe, and demonſtrated his infinite POW-
" ER and WISDOM, from his works, when
" they have done this, THEY HAVE DONE
" ALL; *this includes the whole of natural*
" *Theology, and ſerves abundantly to all the*
" *ends of natural Religion* [9]."

What theſe *ends of natural Religion* are he tells us very plainly. They are, to fit us for *our ſtation here, and to ſupply our real wants in it.* --- " In like manner [that is, as he expreſſes it, *for the neceſſary uſes of human life and no more*] " the know-
" ledge of the creator is on many accounts
" neceſſary to ſuch a creature as man: and
" therefore we are able to arrive, by a pro-
" per exerciſe of our mental faculties, from

[8] Vol. v. p. 316. [9] p. 453.

" the knowledge of God's works, to a " knowledge of his EXISTENCE, and of " that infinite POWER and WISDOM which " are demonſtrated to us in them. OUR " KNOWLEDGE CONCERNING GOD GOES " NO FURTHER [10]."

Now tho' we ſhould be ſo complaiſant to theſe *principles* as not to call them ATHEISTIC, yet I am afraid the Profeſſor of them, whoever he be, muſt be content with a name ſomething like it. For tho' the *principles* may be called NATURALISM, yet if *Scripture* has defined an ATHEIST right, to be one who HAS NO HOPE, and is WITHOUT GOD IN THE WORLD [11] our Profeſſor of Naturaliſm comes within the deſcription. For tho' he acknowledges the being of a God, yet as he is *without a God in the world*, that is, a Being who preſides over it, as the moral Governor of it, which is the foundation on which all Religion ſtands, Religioniſts will ſeek no other title for him. And ſurely he will be properly defined. For tho' the abſtract term *Atheiſm* carries, as it's principal idea, a relation to God's BEING: yet, *Atheiſt*, the concrete, ſeems to have it's

[10] Vol. iv. p. 86. [11] Epheſ. ii. 12.

chief

chief relation to his GOVERNMENT. This is not obſerved for any kind of conſequence it is to Religion, in what claſs the Public will be pleaſed to rank his Lordſhip; but merely to ſet in a true light the honourable Perſon's ingenuity, in aſſuming the character of an *Advocate for Religion*; at the very time he is labouring to root it out of human Society.

Old NATURALISM thus traveſtied under the name of *Religion*, his Lordſhip beſtows, as his laſt and moſt precious Legacy, on his own dear Country. If you will believe him, the only *reformed Religion* that can be called *pure*, and the only *revealed Religion* that has the marks of *truth*. What the world hath hitherto called by that name being, as he aſſures us, an evil in itſelf; and miſchievous to man by it's eſſential conſtitution. And he proves it, as they ſay, in mood and figure. — "To keep up the "ſenſe of it [*i. e.* of *Religion*] in the "minds of men, there ſeem to be but two "ways. To STRIKE THE SENSES fre-"quently, by public and ſolemn acts of "religious worſhip; and to HEAT THE "BRAIN by notions of an inward operation "of the Spirit, and of a ſort of myſtical

"devo-

" devotion, independent of outward forms,
" and even INCONSISTENT with them. One
" of theſe leads to SUPERSTITION, the other
" to ENTHUSIASM. Both are ſilly—Super-
" ſtition is folly: Enthuſiaſm is madneſs.
" It is good to be on our guard againſt
" both."

Without doubt. But how ſhall it be done? *Religion* is an evil in itſelf, and ſo admits of no qualification. It neceſſarily requires, as his Lordſhip tells us, on man's part, public acts of worſhip; and on God's, the private operation of the Spirit: But theſe *lead* to *ſuperſtition* and *enthuſiaſm*; that is, to *folly* and *madneſs*, to the deſtruction of our reaſonable Nature. This is not all: theſe *neceſſary means* are not only hurtful but impracticable. You could not uſe them, was you fooliſh or mad enough to venture on them; for they are, he ſays, INCONSISTENT, and deſtroy one another. What then is to be done? To *be upon our guard*; to keep *Religion* at arms length, till his Lordſhip brings up his reſerve of *Naturaliſm*, to our relief. Let this be our Shield of Braſs; under which we may repoſe in peace, undiſturbed by any frightful dreams of Hell and the Devil.

This,

This, Sir, is the *Enchiridion* of his Lordſhip's FIRST PHILOSOPHY. How ſimple, you will ſay, how cloſe, how round, how full is this *new Diſpenſation?* A diſpenſation *of Religion* ſhall we call it? No matter. The times are ripe for it under any name. Yet I can hardly agree to thoſe fancies, I told you of, which had poſſeſſed his poetical Friend: who, miſled perhaps by that obſcure hint, that *our World was only the Bedlam of every other ſyſtem of intelligent Creatures* [12], ſuppoſed, in good earneſt, his *Philoſopher and Guide* to be ſent down from ſome ſuperior orb, as Phyſician to the Hoſpital. Without queſtion he was made for the Age, and the Age for him. And they may well congratulate one another on the happy meeting. If we muſt be doctrinated by a Poet, I ſhould ſooner a great deal believe the man who told me, that he heard the evil Genius of Britain addreſs his Lordſhip on his firſt ſetting out, in theſe ſtrains,

— "Be as a planetary plague, when Jove
"Will o'er ſome high-vic'd City hang his poiſon
"In the ſick air." —

[12] Vol. iv. p. 353.

But

But to go on with his Syſtem. It riſes on theſe four principles.

Firſt, That we have no adequate ideas of the MORAL ATTRIBUTES of God, his *goodneſs* and his *juſtice*, as we have of his NATURAL, to wit, his *power* and his *wiſdom*.

Secondly, That A FUTURE STATE is a Fable.

Thirdly, That the JEWISH and the CHRISTIAN *Revelations* are falſe. And

Fourthly, That REVELATION ITSELF is impoſſible.

Indulge me with a few remarks on his management, under each of theſe heads.

1. Divines, in their proof of the *moral attributes*, having of late much inſiſted on the arguments *a priori*, as they are called, his Lordſhip ſuſpected, and what he ſuſpects of ill he always takes for granted, that they could not be proved *a poſteriori*, or from *God's works*; the way by which, he owns, his *natural attributes* may be demonſtrated. So that having pronounced the arguments *a priori* to be *jargon*, *nonſenſe*, *impiety and blaſphemy*; the *moral* attributes of God are fairly eraſed at once out of the *intellectual ſyſtem*. And he had no farther trouble on this head than to decorate CLARKE, who was chiefly converſant

converſant in the reaſoning *a priori*, with variety of abuſive names.

As to the Argument, our great Man's reſpect for that is ſo profound and ſo diſtant, that I defy any one unacquainted with metaphyſical reaſonings, even to gueſs what kind of things they are for which the famous Miniſter of St. *James's* is ſo ſeverely handled. For while the *Divine* ſuffers, the *Reaſoner*, as we ſay, always eſcapes. Now indeed you ſee him ſeized upon, and ready, as you would think, to be cut up alive, and immolated to the *firſt Philoſophy*; when a *fit of railing* ſhakes his Lordſhip; and the Storm falls upon the whole Body of *modern Schoolmen*: And ſo the Doctor eſcapes for that time. He is again laid hold on, and every thing ready for execution; when a *fit of learning* comes upon his Lordſhip; and *Pythagoras*, *Plato*, *Socrates*, and the whole band of *ancient Metaphyſicians* paſs in review, and each receives a laſh as he paſſes: And ſo the Doctor eſcapes for the ſecond time. After this, his Lordſhip, as is fitting, takes his eaſe; more intent upon triumph than blood-ſhed; and in the midſt of much ſelf-applauſe

for

for theſe exploits his ESSAYS end, and the *ſubtile* Doctor remains unhurt.

But when need requires, I would have you think, that no avocation can keep him from his Logic. Marry, then, on ſome great occaſion indeed, as when the *novelty* of the ſubject invites, or the true ſtate of it is little known, you ſhall have no reaſon to complain of brevity: then you ſhall ſee him employ one half of his book to prove the corruptions of the CHURCH OF ROME, and near another half, to expoſe the jargon of the SCHOOLMEN.

The truth is, Clarke knew not how to reaſon, and ſo needed no confutation. *In the name of God* (ſays my Lord, of the Doctor's reaſonings) *is this to prove? Do men who prove no better deſerve an anſwer* [13]? But, go further, and you may fare worſe. For ſpeaking of the whole Order, he ſays, "THE PERTNESS, NOT TO SAY THE IM-"PUDENCE, OF THESE MEN DESERVES NO "REGARD [14]." Beſides, I ſuſpect the *arguments* are as IMPUDENT as the *men*, for they pretend to no leſs than to *demonſtrate* God's *moral attributes* and the *immateriality of the Soul.* His Lordſhip therefore

[13] Vol. v. p. 284. [14] Vol. iv. p. 325.

choſe

choſe that his *modeſt* reaſonings, rather than be overborn, ſhould lye incog. and keep in diſguiſe, like *Bays's* army in the *Rehearſal*; till, without noiſe, or ſo much as a review, they had dethroned the *two Kings of Brentford*, CLARKE and WOLLASTON, before any body ſuſpected they were in danger.

2. We come to the ſecond point, the doctrine of a FUTURE STATE: which being ſupported by the great moral argument of "the unequal diſtribution of good and evil amongſt men," his Lordſhip, as I promiſed you, is as large in confuting this as he was ſparing in his anſwer to the metaphyſical proofs of the *moral attributes*.

He firſt endeavours to ſhew the argument to be founded on a miſtaken fact, and that there is no ſuch *unequal* diſtribution: He is almoſt tempted to tell you, that every thing is exactly regular and in order. But a paradox that flies ſo *impudently*, to uſe his own language, in the face of common ſenſe, is too unmanagable even for his Lordſhip's talents: he comes down lower at laſt; and appears to be tolerably ſatisfied, if you will but believe the inequality not near ſo great as *pulpit-Declaim-*

ers would make it: That the diſorders which follow the abuſe of man's free will are not to be placed to the account of that diſpenſation; which our pride and preſumptuous ignorance make us think God is obliged to reform. However, equal or unequal, his capital maxim clears up all. WHATSOEVER IS, IS RIGHT: and therefore the argument of theſe *confederated* Divines which goes upon a ſuppoſed WRONG, is *abſurd and blaſphemous*. Whatever *anſwer* this reaſoning may deſerve, I believe no man who underſtands the world will expect that a well-bred man ſhould give any.

But I cannot omit, on this occaſion, to do juſtice to his poetical Friend; by ſhewing the difference between Mr. POPE's Philoſophy and his Lordſhip's. They both employ the maxim of *Whatever is, is right*. But to know, with what propriety and judgment, we muſt conſider againſt whom they write.

Mr. Pope's *Eſſay on man* is a *real* vindication of Providence againſt *Libertines* and *Atheiſts*; who quarrel with the preſent conſtitution of things, and deny a future State. To theſe he anſwers that *whatever is, is right*: and the reaſon he gives, is, that *we*

ſee

ſee only a part of the moral ſyſtem, and not the whole; therefore theſe irregularities ſerving to great purpoſes, ſuch as the fuller manifeſtation of God's goodneſs and juſtice, they are *right*.

Lord Bolingbroke's *Eſſays* are a *pretended* vindication of Providence againſt an *imaginary confederacy between Divines and Atheiſts*; who uſe a common principle, namely, the *inequalities in God's moral government here*, for different ends and purpoſes; the One to eſtabliſh a *future State*; the Other to diſcredit the *Being of a God*. His Lordſhip, who oppoſes their different concluſions, endeavours to overthrow their common principle, by his Friend's maxim, that *whatever is, is right*; not becauſe the preſent ſtate of our *moral* world (which is part only of a more general ſyſtem) is neceſſary for the greater perfection of the whole, but becauſe our *moral world* is an entire ſyſtem of itſelf.

His Lordſhip *applies* the maxim no better than he underſtands it. Mr. Pope urges it againſt Atheiſts and Libertines, who ſay the conſtitution of things is *faulty*: ſo that the reply, *whatever is, is right*, is pertinent. His Lordſhip directs it, againſt

Divines, who ſay, indeed, that this conſtitution is *imperfect*, if conſidered ſeparately, becauſe it is a part only of a whole, but are as far as his Lordſhip from calling it *faulty*: therefore the reply, *whatever is, is right*, is impertinent. In a word, the Poet directs it againſt Atheiſts and Libertines, in ſupport of Religion properly ſo called; the Philoſopher againſt Divines, in ſupport of Religion improperly ſo called, namely NATURALISM: and the ſucceſs is anſwerable. Mr. Pope's argument is manly, ſyſtematical, and convincing. Lord Bolingbroke's confuſed, prevaricating, and inconſiſtent.

Thus, to inſtance in his Lordſhip. He will have nothing irregular or amiſs in the *moral world*; becauſe this is Atheiſm, and the very bond of that *confederacy* ſigned and ſealed between Divines and them. In vain you tell him of a *future ſtate*, to vindicate the providence of God; this is abſurd and viſionary. But, if you talk of *phyſical evil*, he has his anſwer ready, *this world is but one wheel of a vaſt machine*. You will aſk, then, if the ſuperior good of other parts of the great ſyſtem of Nature can compenſate for the *phyſical evil* in this, why will not his Lordſhip allow the reaſoning

of Pope, in the *Eſſay on man*, that the ſuperior good in another part of the *moral ſyſtem* may compenſate for the *moral evil* in this? I will tell you, he can allow any other parts to belong to the ſyſtem of nature, for the ſolution of *phyſical evil*, without the danger of bringing in Religion: but he cannot, without that danger, allow any other part to belong to the ſyſtem of morals, for the ſolution of *moral* evil. Here, he can allow no more to belong to the ſyſtem than he ſees: indeed, not ſo much: for, as I ſaid above, he appears well inclined to contend for an *equal providence*, or, at leaſt, for very little irregularity.

But why, you will aſk again, would his Lordſhip run himſelf into all this hazard, ſometimes of diſcrediting his reaſoning by a ſilly paradox; ſometimes of betraying it by an unwilling confeſſion; while at beſt he gives it but the poor ſupport of a miſunderſtood and miſapplied maxim; when his great and noble principle of NO MORAL ATTRIBUTES enervates the very *fact*, ſo audaciouſly urged by the CONFEDERACY. For if we have no ideas of God's *moral attributes*, the iſſue of our reaſoning *on*

his ways will be the ſame as if he had none. And if he has none, they need not, ſure, be vindicated: which is the ſole purpoſe of his reaſoning on the ſtate of the moral world. All I can ſay to this is, that his Lordſhip appears to have been ſo harraſſed with this phantom of a FUTURE STATE, that no Charm, no Security was to be neglected that could contribute to his eaſe or protection. Hence it is he will depend on neither of his arguments, of — *no inequality* or — *but a little*: and is as ſhy of them, as they are of one another; and therefore, to make all ſure, caſts about for a third of more acknowledged efficacy.

And this he finds in the SOUL'S MATERIALITY. From whence, he contrives to perſuade himſelf that it can be no *ſubſtance* (which he calls *pneumatical madneſs*) but a mere *quality* of body, produced by the configuration of it's parts, and periſhing with their diſſolution. I ſay, he contrives to perſuade *himſelf*; and I mean no more. Had his point been to perſuade his Reader, we muſt ſuppoſe he would have ventured, at leaſt, to confute the arguments of CLARKE and BAXTER:

who, on the principles of the Newtonian Philoſophy, have demonſtrated *that the ſoul is a ſubſtance*, diſtinct from the body, and different from matter. Inſtead of this, he flies to his uſual conſolation, ABUSE. He calls them *impious* and *blaſphemers* for preſuming to limit the omnipotent: when the higheſt of their preſumption amounts but to this, the ſuppoſing *God can exert no power, which implies a contradiction*; ſince this imaginary power is indeed *impotency*. Nay, he would willingly perſuade himſelf there were no ſuch arguments in being. For, ſpeaking of the reaſoning, which induced men to conclude, the ſoul was a ſubſtance, diſtinct from the body, he repreſents it thus, " Men taking it for granted that " they knew all the perceivable properties " of matter, they concluded that ſuch " things as could not be accounted for by " theſe, were to be accounted for by the " properties of ſome other ſubſtance [13]." And again, " Vanity and preſumption de- " termine Philoſophers to conclude, that " becauſe they cannot account for the phæ- " nomena of the mind by what they know

[13] Vol. iii. p. 502.

" very ſuperficially of ſolid extended ſub-
" ſtance, this mind muſt be ſome other ſub-
" ſtance [14]." Such, indeed, was the ſtate of the controverſy when LOCKE ſkimed over the argument. But CLARKE and BAXTER went to the bottom. They draw their concluſion, not in the preſumption that they knew all the knowable qualities of matter, and that between theſe and *Thought*, there was no perceivable connexion; but from this deep and ſolid truth, that from the little we do know of body, there ariſes a contradiction to ſuppoſe *intelligence* to be a quality of matter.

We have the ſame reaſoning on the *motion of body*. " They are unable (ſays
" his Lordſhip) to conceive how body can
" act at all, and therefore they ſuppoſe
" the immediate preſence and action of
" an incorporeal agent in every operation
" of corporeal nature [15]." Whereas the truth is, they are able to conceive the impoſſibility of bodies acting at all: and, from thence ſee the neceſſity of an *incorporeal agent in every operation of corporeal nature*. You will think, perhaps, his Lord-

[14] Vol. iii. p. 508-9. [15] Vol. iv. p. 108.

ſhip

ſhip knew no more of this queſtion than as it ſtood in his *Maſter Locke*; and that he had never heard of *Baxter*, who has carried it furtheſt, and treated it the moſt profoundly. I ſhould have thought ſo too, but that I find his Lordſhip, in one place, ſpeaking with that contempt of *Baxter's* reaſoning which is his wont, whenever any thing he cannot anſwer bears hard upon the *firſt Philoſophy*. It is where he honours us with his own thoughts concerning ATTRACTION. "Attraction, (ſaith his "Lordſhip) may be, notwithſtanding all "the *ſilly abſtract reaſoning* to the contrary, "a REAL PROPERTY OF MATTER [16]." Now you are to underſtand that *Baxter*, when he has evinced the truth of NEWTON's idea of *attraction* (who makes it no *real*, or eſſential, *property of matter*) employs this idea to prove, that it implies a *contradiction* to ſuppoſe the ſoul may be a quality of matter. This great truth, deep reflection, and a thorough comprehenſion of the Newtonian Philoſophy, enabled *Baxter* to demonſtrate. On the other hand, no reflection, no Philoſophy, but mere *in-*

[16] Vol. iii. p. 547.

tuitive knowledge, led his Lordſhip to conclude that it is ſo far from being a *contradiction*, that it is a real fact, that the *ſoul is a quality of matter*. But, hear his own marvelous words, "I am perſuaded that "God can make material ſyſtems capable "of thought, becauſe I muſt renounce one "of the kinds of knowledge that he has "given me, and the firſt, tho' not the "principal in the order of knowing, or "admit that HE HATH DONE SO [17]." Locke only contended for the bare *poſſibility*. His Lordſhip has found it to be a fact. So fairly has the diſciple outdone his Maſter.

3. But let us now go on with the great principles which ſupport his Lordſhip's Syſtem. His third is the FALSHOOD of the *Jewiſh* and *Chriſtian* REVELATIONS. And here you will find no argument omitted that bears with the leaſt force againſt either of them. It is true, not one of them is his own. I mean, of thoſe deſerving the name of argument. They are all borrowed from the minute Philoſophers who went before him. And, of theſe his Lord-

[17] Vol. iii. p. 531.

ſhip

ſhip is a very obſervant and humble imitator.

His attack on revealed Religion is in two parts. The *firſt*, a confutation of it's truth, as it lies in it's purity, in ſacred Scripture: the *ſecond*, an inſinuation of it's falſhood, as it is ſeen in it's abuſes and corruptions, in particular Churches.

Judaiſm is attacked more fully and avowedly in the firſt way: and *Chriſtianity*, in the ſecond.

1. All the arguments againſt Revelation, as it is repreſented in the Bible, are taken from BLOUNT, TOLAND, COLLINS, CHUBB, MORGAN, and their fellows. I muſt, except, indeed, the atrocious terms in which they are commonly inforced. For the iniquity of the times would not ſuffer thoſe confeſſors of truth *to put forth more than half their ſtrength*, as his Lordſhip himſelf aſſures us [18]. When I ſay his arguments are all taken from theſe men, I do not ſpeak it, in diſparagement of the reaſoning. On the contrary, this is by far the moſt plauſible part of theſe voluminous *Eſſays*.

[18] Vol. iv. p. 163.

One

One thing, indeed, falls out unluckily. All his Lordſhip's great originals profeſſed to believe the MORAL ATTRIBUTES of the deity, in common with the reſt of mankind: And on that principle inforced their arguments againſt the truth of revealed Religion: and indeed what other principle is there that will afford ground for a ſingle objection againſt it? Now his Lordſhip profeſſes to have no idea of theſe *moral attributes*. No matter. They were neceſſary to be taken into ſervice here, for the completion of his ſchemes. And a Philoſopher can drop his principle as a politician does his friend, when he is of no uſe, and renew his acquaintance again when he wants him. Theſe diſcarded *attributes* therefore are on this occaſion taken into favour; ſoon again to be diſmiſſed, and his OLD PRINCIPLE reaſſumed, when he wants to guard againſt the terrors of a future ſtate; in which, to do it juſtice, it performs true Knights-ſervice. Much indeed is it to be lamented, that his *old principle* ſhould ever grow capricious; and that when it had ſo effectually excluded God's moral Government as recommended by *natural Religion*, it ſhould oppoſe itſelf to thoſe arguments

ments which are for excluding God's moral government as recommended by *Revelation*.

An hiſtorical deduction of the abuſes and corruptions of Chriſtianity in the CHURCH OF ROME, to advance ſuperſtition, fanaticiſm, and ſpiritual tyranny, makes the ſecond part of his Lordſhip's reaſoning againſt REVELATION; and the ſubject of the largeſt of his *four Eſſays*.

On this head he expatiates in all the forms of Piety, Patriotiſm, and Humanity. He bewails the diſhonours done to Religion; he reſents the violations of civil Liberty; and he vindicates the common ſenſe of mankind from the ſcholaſtic jargon of an ignorant, debauched, and avaricious Clergy.

Felicia tempora, quæ te
Moribus opponunt: habeat jam ROMA pudorem.

On ſo trite a topic, the topic of every true Proteſtant from Fox to Mr. Chandler, that is, from the firſt to the laſt good writer upon the ſubject, his Lordſhip may be excuſed for unloading his Common-place. Whatever there is of a better taſte, he has taken from Hooker, Stillingfleet, Barrow, and

ſuch

ſuch other of the Engliſh Clergy who have moſt ſucceſsfully detected the errors and uſurpations of Popery.

But as the object of our Divines in this detection was to recommend the Goſpel-truth; and of his Lordſhip, to diſcredit it; he had need of other helps: And theſe, too, were at hand; ſuch as Hobbes, Toland, Tindal, Gordon; whom he faithfully copies, both in exaggerating the abuſes, and in drawing falſe conſequences from the reform of them. Thus, according to thoſe Divines who wrote *for truth*, SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY was modeſtly complained of as hindering the advancement of real knowledge; as keeping men buſied in trifling controverſies, and as making them often miſtake words for things. But with my Lord, and theſe his better guides, who wrote *againſt Revelation*, SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY is boldly accuſed to have blotted out all knowledge, and to have left nothing in it's ſtead but *madneſs*, *frenzy*, and *delirium*.

So again, The end of thoſe Divines in expoſing human uſurpations, was to introduce a RELIGIOUS SOCIETY on the principles of Goſpel-liberty: but the end of theſe Philoſophers in decrying Popery is to eſtabliſh

bliſh a *civil*, in the place of a *religious* uſurpation, and to make the CHURCH A CREATURE OF THE STATE.

In the mean time, he ſays *boldly* and well, "That ſome men are IMPUDENT enough "to *pretend*, others SILLY enough to *be-* "*lieve*, that they adhere to the Goſpel, "and maintain the cauſe of God againſt "infidels and heretics, when they do no- "thing better nor more than expoſe the "conceits of men [19]." But while he is thus buſy in obſerving what happens at one end of this common fallacy, he ſuffers himſelf to ſlip in, at the other: and does juſt the ſame *againſt* the Goſpel, which theſe men do *for* it. He expoſes the knavery of powerful Churchmen, and the folly of profound Divines; and then *pretends*, or *believes*, he hath diſcredited Revelation itſelf. However, to part friends with the *Divines*, after ſo many hard words, he teaches them how to prop up, in ſome *plauſible* way, their bungling ſyſtems of ARTIFICIAL THEOLOGY, juſt as he had before taught God Almighty himſelf to mend his *two Diſpenſations*. "Let us (ſays he) "ſuppoſe a Theiſt objecting — the be-

[19] Vol. iv. p. 385.

"liever

" liever might reply — he might add —
" he might add — and all this with great
" *plauſibility* at leaſt [20]." You will ſay now, I envy my Lord the glory of his inſtructions to defend *artificial theology*, or otherwiſe I, who am not ſparing of my quotations, would have given them at large. To tell you the truth, I ſuppreſſed them with deſign; to excite the Reader's curioſity. It is ſaid there is occaſion for it: and that the Public does not yet appear diſpoſed to pay that profound attention to the *firſt Philoſophy* as might be wiſhed on the firſt appearance of ſo great a bleſſing. You will ſuſpect, by what you have ſeen in my firſt Letter, that the Public may be ſomewhat *overdoſed*, and ſo has *kecked* a little. But it is to be hoped, his Followers will ſoon reconcile them to their Phyſic.

4. His Lordſhip's fourth and laſt great principle is the IMPOSSIBILITY of REVELATION in general.

He has refuſed no arms, we ſee, to combat the Revelations God hath *actually given*. He would ſeem to relax a little of his ſeverity, as to thoſe which God may *poſſibly give*: for in one place he ſays, *he*

[20] Vol. v. p. 279.

will

will not abſolutely pronounce againſt the poſſibility of God's revealing his will to man. But whether he equivocates, whether he altered his mind, or whether he ſimply forgot himſelf (a matter of little conſequence) moſt true it is, that he hath formally laid down, and largely inſiſted upon, certain principles, which make *revealed Religion* a thing UTTERLY IMPOSSIBLE.

Firſt, As to INSPIRATION, he not only denies all *reality* in the thing, but will not allow ſo much as any *meaning* in the word. And a MIRACLE, he holds to be impoſſible, what never was, nor ever can be. But now, without the *firſt*, no divine meſſenger could be ſent; for he muſt receive his orders from God: and without the *ſecond*, no divine meſſenger would be believed; for he muſt have his credentials to ſhew to Man: and theſe credentials, on his Lordſhip's own principles, can be no other than *miracles*.

But here again you are to obſerve, that on this ſubject likewiſe Infidelity is no more indebted to him than for his good will. All he urges againſt *inſpiration* and *miracles* having been firſt urged by HOBBES and SPINOZA: by the one, with more ſubtilty

and

and exactneſs; by the other, with infinite more elegance.

Secondly, His Lordſhip holds the RELIGION OF NATURE to be full, perfect, and well underſtood. He holds, likewiſe, that the only conceivable purpoſe of *Revelation* muſt be to *republiſh* the *Religion of Nature*. The conſequence is, and this his Lordſhip gives us to underſtand, he ſaw, that the uſe of *Revelation* becomes ſuperſeded. For if it teaches *more* than natural Religion taught, or *different* from what it taught, the Revelation muſt be falſe; if only the *ſame*, it is evidently ſuperfluous.

Thirdly, His Lordſhip utterly rejects a PARTICULAR PROVIDENCE. But a revealed Religion is nothing elſe than the exerciſe of that very providence to ſome declared end in the moral Syſtem.

On all theſe accounts, he concludes, and conſequentially enough, that REASON HAS NOTHING FURTHER TO DO, WHEN REVELATION BEGINS [20].

You have now, Sir, the whole of his Lordſhip's SYSTEM, together with his topics in ſupport of it, both very ſuccinctly

[20] Vol. v. p. 274.

deli-

delivered: enough however to ſhew you that theſe famous ESSAYS which you have heard ſo often cried up as the very Mine, the native Treaſury of all divine and human truths, are indeed little other than the *Magazine* or Warehouſe of other men's lumber: or (not to diſhonour his Lordſhip by a mechanical compariſon) like the mouth of your neighbouring SEVERN, turbulent and dirty: which, let fableing *Poets* ſay what they pleaſe, we are ſure never derived it's ſource from the pure and perennial Urn of a *Demi-god*: but, if one may gueſs from the taſte and colour, became thus conſiderable for it's bulk by the confluence of ſhallow brooks and babbling rivulets; of ſtagnant ditches, common-ſewers, and yet ſtranger mixtures; ſcoured off and put into a ferment by the haſty rage of ſome peeviſh land-torrent.

THE main pillar of his Syſtem, you ſee, is this extravagant paradox, *That we have* NO ADEQUATE *ideas of God's moral attributes, his* GOODNESS *and* JUSTICE, *as we have of his natural, his Wiſdom and Power.* And here, let me obſerve once for all, that his Lordſhip uſes the words, *inadequate*

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ideas, and, *no ideas*, as terms of the ſame import. And as I think, not improperly, I have followed him in the indifferent uſe of either expreſſion. For the reaſon of his calling our ideas of God's *moral attributes*, INADEQUATE, is, becauſe he denies goodneſs and juſtice to be the ſame IN KIND, in God as in Man: But if not the ſame *in kind*, we cannot ſurely have *any* idea of them, becauſe we have no idea of any *other kind* of goodneſs and juſtice.

As the reaſoning on this head, contrary to his uſual wont, is entirely his own; and beſides, an extreme curioſity in itſelf, I will once more go a little out of my way, to ſet it in a true light; that it may neither impoſe by it's novelty; nor too much ſhock you and all good men by it's unchecked atrocity. The reſt are adopted impieties, of a paultry plebeian race; but inſerted, tho' in a contrary courſe, into this noble ſtock, with the ſpirit of CLODIUS's famous adoption of old, only for the ſake of public miſchief.

His three Poſitions are, That, by *metaphyſics*, or the reaſoning *a priori*, we can gain no knowledge of God at all.

That our knowledge of his *attributes* are to be acquired only by a contemplation

on

on his *Works*, or by the reaſoning *a poſteriori*.

That in this way, we can only arrive at the knowledge of his *natural* attributes, not of his *moral*.

" It is from the conſtitution of the " world ALONE (ſays his Lordſhip) and " from the ſtate of mankind in it, that we " can *acquire any ideas* of the divine attri- " butes, or a *right to affirm any thing about* " *them* [1]."

" The knowledge of the Creator is on " many accounts neceſſary to ſuch a crea- " ture as man: and therefore we are made " able to arrive by a proper exerciſe of our " mental faculties, *from a knowledge of* " *God's works to a knowledge of his exiſtence*, " and of that infinite POWER and WISDOM " which are demonſtrated to us in them. " OUR KNOWLEDGE CONCERNING GOD " GOES NO FURTHER [2]."

" Artificial Theology connects by very " problematical reaſoning *a priori*, MORAL " *attributes*, ſuch as we conceive them, " and ſuch as they are relatively to us, " with the *phyſical* attributes of God; " tho' there be no ſufficient foundation

[1] Vol. v. p. 331.

[2] Vol. iv. p. 86.

" for this proceeding, nay, tho' *the phæ-*
" *nomena are in ſeveral caſes repugnant*[3]."

Having thus aſſured us that the ideas of God's *moral attributes* are to be got by no reaſoning at all, either *a priori* or *a poſteriori*, the only two ways we have to knowledge; He rightly concludes, that if man has ſuch ideas, they were not *found* but *invented* by him. And therefore, that nothing might be wanting to the full dilucidation of this curious point, he acquaints us who were the Authors of the fiction, and how ſtrangely the thing came about.

" Some of the Philoſophers (ſays his
" Lordſhip) having been led by a more full
" and accurate contemplation of Nature to
" the knowledge of a ſupreme ſelf-exiſtent
" Being of infinite *power and wiſdom*, and
" the firſt Cauſe of all things, were not
" contented with this degree of knowledge.
" They MADE A SYSTEM of God's MO-
" RAL as well as *phyſical* attributes, BY
" WHICH TO ACCOUNT FOR THE PRO-
" CEEDINGS OF HIS PROVIDENCE [4]."

Theſe Philoſophers then, it ſeems, *invented* the ſyſtem of God's *moral attributes*, in order to account for the difficulties ariſing

[3] Vol. v. p. 316.

[4] Vol. iv. p. 48.

from

from the view of God's moral government. If the World had till now been ſo dull as to have no conception of theſe Attributes; his Lordſhip's Philoſophers, we ſee, made ample amends; who were ſo quick witted as to conceive, and ſo ſharp ſighted as to perceive, the obliquities of a *crooked* line before they had got any idea of a *ſtraight* one. For juſt to this, neither more nor leſs, does his Lordſhip's profound obſervation concerning this profounder diſcovery amount, when he ſays, *they made a Syſtem of God's moral attributes, by which to account for the proceedings of his Providence.*

This *invention* of his Lordſhip's old Philoſophers would put one in mind of an ingenious Modern, the curious SANCHO PANÇA; who, as his hiſtorian tells us, was very inquiſitive to find out the Author of that very uſeful *invention* we call SLEEP: for, with this worthy Magiſtrate, Sleep and good Cheer were the *Firſt Philoſophy*. Now the things ſought after by Sancho and his Lordſhip were at no great diſtance: for if *Sleeping* began when men firſt ſhut their eyes, it is certain the *idea of God's Goodneſs* appeared as ſoon as ever they opened them.

Dr. Clarke's Demonſtration of the moral attributes *a priori*, I ſhall leave, as his Lordſhip is pleaſed to do, in all it's force. If the Doctor's followers think their Maſter's honour concerned, where his arguments are not, they have a large field and a ſafe to ſhew their proweſs.

I rather chuſe to undertake his Lordſhip on his own terms, without any other arms than the arguments *a poſteriori*. For he is ſuch a Champion for the good Cauſe, that he not only appoints his adverſaries the field, but preſcribes to them the uſe of their weapons.

But his Lordſhip, like other great men, is not eaſily approached; and when he is, not always fit to be ſeen. You catch his FIRST PHILOSOPHY, as Butler's Hero did Ariſtotle's FIRST MATTER, *undreſſed, and without a rag of form*, but flaunting and fluttering in FRAGMENTS. To ſpeak plainly, his Lordſhip's entire want of method betrays him into endleſs REPETITIONS: and in theſe, whether for want of preciſion in his ideas, propriety in his terms, or art in his compoſition, the queſtion is perpetually changing; and rarely without being new covered by an equivocal expreſſion. If you add to this, the

perpetual

perpetual CONTRADICTIONS into which he falls, either by defect of memory, excefs of paffion, or diftrefs of argument, you will allow it to be no eafy matter to take him fairly, to know him fully, and to repreſent him to the beſt advantage; in none of which offices would I be willingly defective. Indeed, when you have done this, the buſineſs is over; and his Lordſhip's reaſoning generally confutes itſelf.

When I reflect upon what this has coſt me, no leſs than the reading over two or three bulky Volumes to get poſſeſſion of a ſingle argument; which now you think you hold, and then again you loſe; it meets you full when you leaſt expect it, and it ſlips away from you the very moment it promiſes to do moſt: when, I ſay, I reflect upon all this, I cannot but lament the hard luck of our CLERGY, who, tho' leaſt fit, and indeed leaſt *concerned*, as there is nothing that can impoſe on a Scholar, and a great deal that may miſlead the People, are likely to be the men moſt engaged in this controverſy with his Lordſhip. Time was, when if a Writer had a diſpoſition to ſeek objections to Religion, tho' he found them hardly, and they moved heavily, yet he would digeſt his thoughts, and range his arguments, and me-

thodize his reaſoning. The Clergy had then nothing to do but to anſwer him, if they could. But ſince this ſlovenly cuſtom (as Lord SHAFTSBURY calls it) of *taking their phyſic in public*, has got amongſt our Free-thinkers, that is, of doſeing themſelves well with doubts; and then as haſtily diſcharging their looſe and crude indigeſtions into *Fragments*; things which, in their very name, imply not ſo much the want, as the excluſion of all *Form*; the advocate of Religion has had a double labour: he muſt work them into conſiſtence, he muſt mould them into ſhape, before he can lay hold of them ſafely, or preſent them handſomely. But theſe Gentlemen have taken care that a Clergyman ſhould not be idle. He finds the ſame to do in the diſcharge of his *office paſtoral*. All he had of old to attend was the ſaving the ſouls of thoſe committed to his care. He muſt now begin his work a great deal higher; he muſt firſt convince his flock that they have a ſoul to be ſaved. And the ſpite of all is, that at the time his kind maſters have thus doubled his taſk, they appear very well diſpoſed to leſſen his wages.

We have obſerved, that the DENIAL of God's *moral attributes* is the great barrier againſt

againſt Religion in general: but it is more eſpecially ſerviceable in his Lordſhip's idioſyncratic terrors; the terrors of a *future State*. To theſe we owe his famous book of FRAGMENTS, compoſed occaſionally, and taken as an extemporaneous cordial, each ſtronger than the other, to ſupport himſelf under his frequent paroxyſms.

For, ſet the *moral attributes* aſide, and we can neither form any judgment of the *end* of man, nor of the *nature* of God's moral government. All our knowledge will be then confined to our *preſent* ſtate and condition. It is by theſe attributes alone, we learn, that man was made for *happineſs*; and that God's diſpenſation to us *here* is but *part* of our moral ſyſtem: This naturally extends our views to, and terminates our knowledge in, the certainty of a *future ſtate*.

The FATE of all Religion therefore being included in the queſtion of God's *moral attributes*, I hold it of importance to prove, againſt his Lordſhip, that MEN MAY ACQUIRE ADEQUATE IDEAS OF THEM in the ſame way, and with equal certainty, that his Lordſhip in the following words hath ſhewn us, we acquire the knowledge of God's *natural attributes*.

" All

" All our knowledge of God (fays he)
" is derived from his works. Every part
" of the immenſe univerſe, and the or-
" der and harmony of the Whole, are
" not only conformable to our ideas or
" notions of WISDOM and POWER, but
" theſe ideas and notions were impreſſed
" originally and principally by them, on
" every attentive mind; and men were led
" to conclude, with the utmoſt certain-
" ty, that a Being of infinite *wiſdom* and
" *power* made, preſerved, and governed
" the ſyſtem. As far as we can diſcover,
" we diſcern theſe in all his works; and
" where we cannot diſcern them, it is
" manifeſtly due to our imperfection, not
" to his. This now is real knowledge,
" or there is no ſuch thing as knowledge.
" We acquire it immediately in the objects
" themſelves, in God, and in Nature, the
" work of God. We know what *wiſdom*
" and *power* are: we know both intuitive-
" ly, and by the help of our ſenſes, that
" ſuch as we conceive them to be, ſuch
" they appear in the Work: and therefore
" we know demonſtratively that ſuch they
" are in the Worker [5]."

[5] Vol v. p. 524.

All this is mighty well: and on theſe very grounds I undertake to prove that men may get as clear and as preciſe ideas of GOD'S GOODNESS and JUSTICE, as of his *wiſdom* and *power*.

But, to prevent, or, indeed, now things are ſo far gone, rather to *redreſs*, all ambiguity in the terms, and equivocation in the uſe of them; it will be proper to explain what true PHILOSOPHY means by GOD'S WORKS, whether *phyſical* or *moral*.

Now I underſtand by it, that CONSTITUTION OF THINGS which God hath eſtabliſhed and directed, tending to a plain and evident end: without regard to thoſe impediments or obſtructions in it's courſe, which the Author of nature hath permitted to ariſe from any part of the *material*, or *intellectual* Creation.

Thus, when we conſider his *phyſical* works, in order to make our eſtimate of his *wiſdom* and *power*, we conceive them as they are in themſelves; and in the perfection of their Conſtitution; tho' the great portion of the *phyſical* ſyſtem may, from the intractability of matter, be ſubject to ſome *inconſiderable irregularities*, which, as the true PHILOSOPHER obſerves

will

will be apt to increaſe till this ſyſtem wants a reformation: and tho' the ſmaller portions, ſuch as the bodies of animals, may, from various accidents in their conception and birth, often want that convenient formation and adaption of their parts, from the wonderful contrivance of which, in the various bodies of all animals in general, ariſes ſo illuſtrious an evidence of the *wiſdom* and *power* of the Workman.

Surely, then, common ſenſe, and all equitable meaſure, require us to eſtimate God's *moral works* on the ſame ſtandard: to conſider what the moral *conſtitution is in itſelf*: and (when the queſtion is of God's *goodneſs* and *juſtice*) to keep that view diſtinct and ſeparate: nor ſuffer it to be diſturbed or broken by any interruptions occaſioned thro' the perverſe influence either of the paſſion or action of material or immaterial Beings. For, in this caſe, Both concur to violate the Conſtitution. In the *natural* ſyſtem, man's *Free-will* has no place: in the *moral*, the abuſe of *Free-will* occaſions the moſt and greateſt of it's diſorders.

In proſecuting this queſtion therefore, As, in order to acquire and confirm our ideas of God's *wiſdom* and *power*, we con-

ſider the *natural ſyſtem* only as it's order and harmony is ſupported by the *general Laws* of matter and motion: ſo, in order to acquire and confirm our ideas of his *goodneſs* and *juſtice*, we ſhould regard the *moral ſyſtem* only as it's order and harmony is ſupported by that GENERAL LAW, which annexes *happineſs to virtue, and miſery to vice.*

Thus much, and only thus much, is *God's work*, in either ſyſtem: and it is from *God's work* we are to demonſtrate his *attributes.* The reſt, where real or apparent diſorders obtrude themſelves, to obſtruct our views in theſe diſcoveries, proceeds from *matter* and the *human mind.*

And it is not to be forgotten, that the concluſion we draw from hence, in ſupport of our *adequate* ideas of God's *moral* attributes, has the greater ſtrength upon his Lordſhip's own principles; who holds, that this Conſtitution ariſes *ſolely from the* WILL of God: For then we are ſure that the WILL, which annexes happineſs to virtue, and miſery to vice, muſt ariſe from God's *moral* rather than from his firſt *phyſical* nature.

Having premiſed thus much, tho' no more than neceſſary to obviate one con-

tinued SOPHISM, that runs thro' all his Lordſhip's reaſonings, againſt the *moral attributes*: where, the courſe and operation of that *moral* Conſtitution as it appears under the diſturbances occaſioned by man's *free-will*, is perpetually put for the *Conſtitution itſelf*: I now proceed to ſhew, from GOD'S WORKS, that we have as preciſe ideas of his GOODNESS and JUSTICE as of his *power* and *wiſdom*.

His Lordſhip obſerves, that *from every part of the immenſe univerſe, and from the harmony of the whole, men are led to conclude, with the utmoſt certainty, that a Being of infinite wiſdom and power made, preſerved, and governed the ſyſtem.* And what ſhould hinder the Religioniſt from obſerving, that the happineſs attendant on virtue, and the miſery conſequent on vice by the very Conſtitution of nature, lead men to conclude, with equal certainty, that a Being of infinite *goodneſs* and *juſtice* made, preſerves, and governs the ſyſtem?

The exiſtence of this *moral Conſtitution* his Lordſhip acknowledges. Let us conſider it, therefore, both as it reſpects BODIES of men, and INDIVIDUALS.

That *Communities* are always happy or miſerable

miſerable in proportion to their virtuous or vicious manners, his Lordſhip himſelf is the forwardeſt to demonſtrate. If ſuch a Conſtitution of things does not beſpeak the Author of it *good* and *juſt*, how is it poſſible to conclude any thing of the character of a Creator from his Works? His Lordſhip thinks, that from the marks of *wiſdom* and *power* in the *phyſical ſyſtem* we learn with the utmoſt certainty that God is wiſe and powerful; and he ſays, that we acquire this knowledge immediately, as it were, by our ſenſes. Are there not the ſelf ſame marks of *goodneſs* and *juſtice* in this part at leaſt of the *moral ſyſtem?* And do not we come to know as immediately by our ſenſes, and as certainly by our reaſon, that God is good and juſt?

If we conſider the *moral Conſtitution*, as it reſpects *Particulars*, we ſee virtue and vice have the ſame influence on our happineſs and miſery. Here, indeed, we find more interruptions, in the means to the end, than in the other part. Our material and our intellectual Nature have here more power to diſorder the operations of the Syſtem. In *Communities*, they can rarely be diſturbed, but by a Peſtilence, or that other moral Plague, a Hero or a Conqueror:

Amongſt

Amongſt *Particulars*, phyſical evil and the abuſe of free-will bring more frequent diſorders. But when once the demonſtration of the *moral attributes* is clearly made from that part of the conſtitution which regards *Communities*, it can never be ſhaken by the diſorders in the other part of it, which regards *Particulars*. The eſtabliſhed truth is now a Principle to proceed upon in our diſcoveries; and as to the interruptions in the latter inſtance, all we can fairly deduce from thence is, the CERTAINTY of a *future State*. But this by the way.

What I inſiſt upon at preſent is, that, to decide the queſtion concerning God's attributes, we are to conſider the Conſtitution of things, as it is in itſelf, ſimply; this is, properly, *God's work*. The diſorders in it, occaſioned by the abuſe of man's *free-will*, is not his Work, but man's. This, his Lordſhip too, upon another occaſion, namely, when he combats the argument of a *future ſtate* from an unequal Providence, is perpetually repeating. So that theſe diſorders muſt, even on his Lordſhip's own principles, be excluded from the account, when we eſtimate God's Nature and *Attributes* from his *Works*.

But

But we do not ſee thoſe diſorders in the *natural* world which we both ſee and feel in the *moral*. This would be ſome objection did God direct things *immediately*, or conſtitute them *mechanically*, in the moral, as he does in the natural Syſtem; or had Free-will the ſame influence on the latter as on the former. — Did God direct in both Conſtitutions, or did he direct in neither, *immediately* or *mechanically*, and that yet the *moral* continued more ſubject to diſorder than the *natural*, it might then indeed follow that we had not ſo clear ideas of God's *goodneſs* and *juſtice* as of his *wiſdom* and *power*. But ſince he has thought fit to leave man, FREE; and has been pleaſed to ſuffer the abuſe of free-will to affect the *moral* ſyſtem, and not the *natural*; the ſuperior irregularities in the *one* do not take off from the equal clearneſs of the demonſtration which reſults from the nature of *both* Conſtitutions. "This differ-
" ence (to ſpeak in the words of a late
" writer) is not to be aſcribed to a
" contrary conduct in the Governor of the
" two Syſtems, but to the contrary natures
" of the Subjects. Paſſive matter being to-
" tally inert, it's reſiſtance to the Laws im-

" preſſed upon it, muſt be extremely weak:
" and conſequently the diſorders ariſing
" from that reſiſtance proportionably flow
" and unheeded: while that active ſelf-
" moving principle, the Mind, flies out at
" once from the centre of its direction,
" and can every moment deflect from the
" line of truth and reaſon. Hence moral
" diſorders began early, became exceſſive,
" and have continued, through all ages, to
" diſturb the harmony of the Syſtem [6]."

What is here ſaid will, I ſuppoſe, be ſufficient to confute the following aſſertions; and to detect the miſtake on which they ariſe.

" Every thing (ſays his Lordſhip) ſhews
" the *wiſdom* and *power* of God conformably
" to our ideas of wiſdom and power in the
" *phyſical* world and in the *moral*. *But*
" *every thing does not ſhew in like manner*
" *the juſtice and goodneſs conformably to our*
" *ideas of theſe attributes in either. The*
" *phyſical attributes are in their nature*
" *more glaring and leſs equivocal* [7]."

And again. " There is *no ſufficient*

[6] *The principles of natural and revealed Religion, in a courſe of Sermons at Lincoln's-Inn.* Vol. i. p. 66.

[7] Vol. v. p. 524.

" *founda-*

" *foundation* in the phænomena of nature " to connect the moral attributes with the " phyſical attributes of God. *Nay, the* " *phænomena are in ſeveral caſes repugnant* " [8]."

But ſince he goes ſo far as to talk of the *want of a foundation*, and even a *repugnancy*; Before I proceed with the main branch of my reaſoning, I will juſt urge one ſingle argument for the reality and full evidence of the *moral attributes*: and it ſhall be taken from himſelf, and ſhall conclude on his own principles.

He tells us, that ſuch as he, " who " apply themſelves to the *firſt Philoſophy*, " apply themſelves to the nobleſt objects " that can demand the attention of the " mind — To the ſignification of GOD's " WILL, concerning the duties we owe to " him, and to one another [9]."

And again, " It is ſufficient to eſtabliſh " our moral obligations that we conſider " them relatively to our own ſyſtem. " From thence they ariſe: and ſince they " ariſe from thence, it muſt be the WILL of

[8] Vol. v. p. 316. [9] Vol. v. p. 447.

" that Being who made the ſyſtem, that we " ſhould obſerve and practiſe them [10]."

Let me aſk then, How it is that we collect this WILL from the objects which his Lordſhip allows us to contemplate, namely, his WORKS *in this ſyſtem?* He will ſay from certain *qualities* in thoſe objects. — What are thoſe qualities? He will reply, the *fitneſſes* of means to ends. — Who was the Author of theſe fitneſſes? He hath told us, the *God of nature.* — It was God's *will* then we ſhould uſe the *means* in order to obtain the *ends.* Now, in the *moral* ſyſtem, the means are virtuous practice; the end, happineſs. Virtue therefore muſt needs be pleaſing to him; and Vice, as it's contrary, diſpleaſing. Well, but then, as to this *like* and *diſlike*; it muſt be either capricious, or it muſt be regulated on the nature of things. *Wiſdom*, which his Lordſhip condeſcends to give his Maker, will not allow us to ſuppoſe it capricious. It is regulated therefore on the nature of things. But if the nature of things be, as his Lordſhip holds it is, the conſtitution of God, and *dependent on his will*, then he who is pleaſed with virtue,

[10] Vol. v. p. 452.

and

and diſpleaſed with vice, muſt needs be himſelf *good* and *juſt*.

To proceed now with my main argument. His Lordſhip goes on thus. *But men not only might collect God's natural attributes from the phyſical ſyſtem, but in effect they did: and all men, at all times, had theſe notions ſo ſtrongly impreſſed on them, that they were led to conclude with the utmoſt certainty for a Being of infinite power and wiſdom.*

I deſire to know in what time or place it ever happened, before his Lordſhip philoſophiſed at *Batterſea*, that a Man, who believed God's infinite wiſdom and power, did not with equal confidence believe his infinite goodneſs and juſtice? In truth, theſe two ſets of ideas, the *phyſical* and *moral* attributes of the Deity, were equally extenſive, they were equally ſteady, and they were always till now inſeparable.

He ſays, that *as far as we can diſcover, we diſcern infinite wiſdom and power in all God's works: and where we cannot diſcern them, it is manifeſtly due to our imperfection not to his.*

What his Lordſhip here ſays will deſerve to be well conſidered. A compariſon, we ſee, is inſinuated between our diſcovery of

infinite power; and wiſdom, from the *phyſical* works of God; and our diſcovery of infinite goodneſs and juſtice, from his *moral* works; in which the advantage is given to the former. Now, to come to any clear deciſion in this point (omitting at preſent the notice of his general Sophiſm which operates in this obſervation, as in the reſt) we muſt diſtinguiſh between the *means of acquiring* the knowledge of God's attributes, and that *knowledge when acquired*. As to the firſt, the *means of acquiring*, there ſeems to be ſome advantage on the ſide of God's phyſical works. For, as his Lordſhip rightly obſerves, *where we cannot diſcern wiſdom and power in the phyſical works it is due to our imperfection, not to his: for as men advance in the knowledge of nature we ſee more and more of wiſdom and power*. And he inſinuates, we cannot ſay the ſame concerning the difficulties in the *moral* ſyſtem. It is true, we cannot. But then let us tell him, neither can we ſay the contrary. The reaſon is, The phyſical ſyſtem lies open to our enquiries; and by the right application of our ſenſes, to well tried experiments, we are able to make conſiderable advances in the knowledge of Nature.

ture. It is not ſo in the *moral* ſyſtem; all we know here are a few general principles concerning its Conſtitution; and further than this, human wit or induſtry can never get. Theſe general principles, indeed, are amply ſufficient to deduce and eſtabliſh the *moral attributes* from the *moral ſyſtem*, but not ſufficient to remove difficulties that ariſe from what we ſee of the actual adminiſtration of that ſyſtem. So that, tho' *we* cannot ſay, that *as we advance in the knowledge* of the moral ſyſtem *we ſee more and more of goodneſs and juſtice:* So neither can *his Lordſhip* ſay (tho' his words ſeem to inſinuate he could) that as we advance, we ſee *leſs and leſs.* Whereas the truth is we cannot advance at all, beyond thoſe few general principles.

But then, on the other hand, with regard to the *knowledge of the attributes, when acquired,* I hold the advantage, and a very great one it is, lies altogether on the ſide of the MORAL. And this, I cannot better explain to you than in the words of a late writer, quoted once before: "Tho' the "idea (ſays this Divine) of God's *natural* at-"tributes be as clear in the abſtract, as that "of his *moral,* yet the idea of his moral

" attributes is, in the concrete, more ade-
" quate than that of his natural. The reaſon
" ſeems convincing. The moral relation in
" which we ſtand to God, as free agents,
" is juſt the ſame whether man exiſts alone,
" or whether he be but a link in the chain
" of innumerable orders of intelligences
" ſurrounding the whole Creation. Hence
" we muſt needs have a full knowledge of
" our duty to him, and of his diſpoſition
" towards us: on which knowledge is
" founded the exactneſs of our conceptions
" of his moral attributes, his *juſtice* and
" *goodneſs*. But the natural relation in
" which we, or any of God's creatures,
" ſtand towards him, as material Beings, is
" not the ſame when conſidered ſimply, as
" when a portion of a dependent and con-
" nected whole. Becauſe whenever ſuch a
" whole exiſts, the harmony and perfection
" of it muſt firſt of all be conſulted. This
" harmony ariſeth from the mutual ſubſer-
" viency and union of it's parts. But this
" ſubſerviency may require a miniſtration of
" government, with regard to certain porti-
" ons of matter thus allied, different from
" what might have followed had thoſe por-
" tions ſtood alone, becauſe that preciſe diſ-

" poſition,

" position, which might be fit in one case
" might be unfit in the other. Hence we,
" who know there is a whole, of which
" our material system is a part; and yet are
" totally ignorant both of it's nature and
" extent, can have but a very confused idea
" of that physical relation in which we
" stand towards God: so that our con-
" ceptions of his *natural* attributes, his
" *power* and *wisdom*, which are founded on
" that idea, must in the concrete be propor-
" tionably vague and inadequate [11]."

But you will ask, perhaps, whence arises this reciprocal advantage which the *moral* and the *natural* attributes have over one another in the *means of acquiring* the knowledge of them, and the precision of *that knowledge when acquired?* I will tell you in two words. Of *our own* physical system, we know many particulars, (that is, we discover much of the *means*, but nothing of the *end*) and of the *universal* physical system we are entirely ignorant. On the other hand, we know but few particulars of *our own* moral system, (that is, we discover only the *end*,

[11] *The principles of natural and revealed Religion, in a course of Sermons at Lincoln's Inn*, Vol. i. p. 58, *& seq.*

and

and not the *means*) and of the *univerſal* moral ſyſtem we know the general principles.

His Lordſhip proceeds. *This now* [the knowledge of God's *natural* attributes] *is real knowledge; or there is no ſuch thing as knowledge. We acquire it immediately in the objects themſelves,* IN GOD, *and in nature the work of God.*

What his Lordſhip means by, *in God*, diſtinct from the *work of God*, I confeſs I do not underſtand: Perhaps it may be intended to inſinuate, in honour of the *natural attributes* that they may be even proved *a priori*; for this is not the firſt time by many, when after having heartily abuſed a perſon or thing, he has been reduced to avail himſelf of the authority, or the reaſoning, they afford him. Or perhaps, it was only uſed to round the period, and ſet off his eloquence. However I agree with him, that this is *real knowledge*. And ſo too, I think, is the knowledge of the *moral* attributes, ſo gained. Why truly, ſays his Lordſhip, *I do allow juſt ſo much goodneſs and juſtice in God as we ſee in that* CONSTITUTION *which annexes happineſs to virtue and miſery to vice. But this*, ſays he, *I think, had better be called* WISDOM. I think ſo too; if by,

ſo

ſo much, he means no more than what concerns God's *natural government*. But I will venture to go further, and ſay, that, from what we ſee in this *conſtitution*, we may collect PERFECT goodneſs and juſtice. *Matter* and man's *Free-will* diſturb the Syſtem. But if the Conſtitution be the effect of God's *Will*, as his Lordſhip holds; and the mark of his *Wiſdom*, as all mankind hold; Does not that *Wiſdom* require that his *Will* ſhould not be defeated? Would it not be defeated, if the diſorders occaſioned by the perverſity of his creatures were not remedied and ſet right? And is not A REMEDY the cleareſt mark of *perfect goodneſs* and *juſtice*?

Take it in another light. Free-will croſſes the Conſtitution, which God, by eſtabliſhing, ſhews he intended ſhould take place. This *preſent* diſturbance could not have been prevented, becauſe, according to my Lord and his Poet, it was neceſſary to the ſchemes of divine wiſdom, that there ſhould be ſuch a creature as man:

" For in the ſcale of reaſoning life, 'tis plain
" There muſt be, ſomewhere, ſuch a rank as man.

the conſequence is, that the diſorder will be *hereafter rectified*.

Had

Had God indeed made Man *unneceſſarily*; and this Man had broke in upon God's Syſtem, his Lordſhip might then have had ſome pretence to ſay, as he does, that GOD MEANT THE SYSTEM SHOULD NOT BE FURTHER PURSUED; that is, that the SYSTEM, which annexes happineſs to virtue and miſery to vice, ſhould remain in it's preſent ſtate of an unperfected diſpenſation, to all eternity.

He goes on. *We know what* WISDOM *and* POWER *are. We know both intuitively, and by the help of our ſenſes, that ſuch as we conceive them to be, ſuch they appear in the* WORK; *and therefore we know demonſtratively that ſuch they are in the* WORKER.

And do we not know what GOODNESS and JUSTICE are? Do we not *intuitively*, and by the *help of our ſenſes know*, that ſuch as we conceive them to be, ſuch they appear in the WORK, namely, in that *conſtitution of things*, which, his Lordſhip tells us, annexes happineſs to virtue, and miſery to vice? And may we not *demonſtratively* collect from thence that ſuch they are in the WORKER? ſince this Conſtitution, his Lordſhip again tells us, is the effect of God's *will*. On his own principles therefore, applied

plied to his own ſtate of the reaſoning *a poſteriori*, it appears that God is of *infinite goodneſs* and *juſtice*, as well as of *wiſdom* and *power*. And was I to imitate his Lordſhip's language, I ſhould ſay of a man who denied all this,

— " O Medici, mediam pertundite venam :
" Delicias hominis !

But to give authority to this *prodigious* reaſoning, He, in one place, puts it into the mouth of *Anaxagoras*. " Should you aſk
" *Anaxagoras* (ſays he) what *goodneſs* is,
" or *juſtice?* He might bid you, perhaps,
" turn your eyes inward, firſt; then, ſurvey mankind; obſerve the wants of in-
" dividuals, the benefits of ſociety, and,
" from theſe particulars, frame the general
" notions of *goodneſs* and *juſtice*. He
" might go a ſtep further; and add, this is
" *human* goodneſs and *human* juſtice, ſuch
" as we can comprehend, ſuch as we can
" exerciſe; and ſuch as the ſupreme mind
" has made it both our duty and intereſt to
" exerciſe, by the conſtitution of the hu-
" man ſyſtem, and by the relations which
" ariſe in it: from all which our notions of
" *goodneſs* and *juſtice* reſult, and are com-
" pounded."

We

We know then, what *goodneſs* and *juſtice* are, as well as what *wiſdom* and *power* are; *we know both intuitively and by the help of our ſenſes, that ſuch as we conceive them to be, ſuch they appear in the work* — for he bids us to *turn our eyes inward* — then to *ſurvey mankind*, and laſtly, to obſerve how *reaſon*, from the *conſtitution of human nature*, confirms our *intuitive* knowledge, and that which we gain by the *help of our ſenſes*. But what does all this ſignify, if *Anaxagoras* or his Lordſhip be in an humour of concluding againſt their own premiſſes? — Hear then how the ſpeech ends. — "Of *divine goodneſs* and divine juſtice "might this Philoſopher conclude, I AM "UNABLE TO FRAME ANY ADEQUATE "NOTIONS [12]."

What? Unable to *frame* that which God by the *moral* conſtitution has *framed to our hands*; and by the declaration of his WILL has taught us to *apply*? In truth, his Lordſhip brings his old Sophiſts not, as one would expect, to chop Logic for *him*, but to play at *croſs purpoſes* with *us*. — *We* DO KNOW, ſays Anaxagoras, *what* Goodneſs *and* Juſtice *are: we know both intuitively,*

[12] Vol. iv. p. 116, 17.

and

and by the help of our ſenſes, that ſuch as we conceive them to be, ſuch they appear in the work; *and* THEREFORE *we* DO NOT KNOW *that ſuch they are in the worker.*

Might I be permitted to addreſs myſelf to this Renegado Sophiſt, I would ſay, — Your brethren, the antient Philoſophers, reaſoned *a poſteriori* in this manner, "Can you think there is *wiſdom* and *power* in you, and none in your Maker?" By no means. They reaſoned well. — Let me aſk you then, is there *goodneſs* and *juſtice* in you, and none in your Maker? His anſwer, I ſuppoſe, would be the ſame. But, prompted by his Lordſhip, into whoſe ſervice he is now entered, he perhaps might add, that from *human goodneſs* and *juſtice* we cannot come to the NATURE of the *divine*. What hinders us, I beſeech you? Is it not from our *intuitive conception* of our own *wiſdom* and *power* that we gain an adequate idea of God's? Are *wiſdom* and *power* MORE PERFECT as they are found in man, than *goodneſs* and *juſtice?* If therefore the IMPERFECTION of the human qualities hinder our acquiring an adequate idea of God's attributes, we can have no adequate idea of his *wiſdom* and *power*: If the IMPERFECTION does

does not hinder, then we may have an adequate idea of his *goodneſs* and *juſtice*.

But, the inference to God's *power* and *wiſdom*, his Lordſhip ſays, is ſupported by what men ſee of the effects in his Works; the order and harmony of the phyſical Syſtem. Do we not ſee likewiſe the effects of God's *goodneſs* and *juſtice*, in the happineſs that *naturally* attends virtue and the miſery conſequent on vice? And is not the *moral* order and harmony as much *God's Work*, as the *phyſical*?

Thus, Sir, you ſee, that by the *very reaſoning* his Lordſhip EMPLOYS to prove the *natural* attributes, and by the *very method* he PRESCRIBES to us for proving the *moral*, we have demonſtrated *theſe* with a preciſion and a certainty, at leaſt, equal to the other.

His Lordſhip ſeems to have been aware of the event; and therefore when he had ſet us at defiance, he tried to put the change upon us, by pretending to remind us that the *moral attributes* ſhould be examined by, or *applied to*, THE CONSTITUTION OF THE WORLD AND THE STATE OF MANKIND IN IT [13]. I had as much reaſon to be

[13] Vol. v. p. 331.

aware

aware of his Lordſhip. And therefore, in ſtating the queſtion, at my entrance on this ſubject, I obviated this miſerable Sophiſm. I call it by no better name, becauſe it is not *the conſtitution of the world or the ſtate of mankind in it*, but the CONSTITUTION OF THE MORAL SYSTEM, or the ſtate of virtue and vice, as they naturally operate to produce happineſs and miſery, by which God's *moral attributes* are to be tried and aſcertained. But this, which is a ſteady and uniform view, he would have us turn away from; to contemplate that obſcure, diſturbed, and ſhifting ſcene, the actual ſtate of vice and virtue, of miſery and happineſs, amongſt men. That is, he would have us conclude concerning God's nature, not from his VOLUNTARY CONSTITUTION of things, but from the breaches into that conſtitution by the abuſe of man's free-will: which yet, when he is arguing *for an equal providence*, he again and again confeſſes ought not to be charged upon God; and declaims violently againſt the folly of thoſe who impute the effects of that abuſe to him. While here, in his various attempts to blot out *the idea of God's moral attributes*, he is full

of the diſorders of the moral Syſtem as part of God's deſign. But now I have mentioned his arguments for an equal providence, I ſhould be unjuſt to You, who expect a fair *view* of his Lordſhip's Philoſophy from me, if I concealed another of his contradictions. — He had both a *future State* and *God's moral attributes* to throw out of the religious world; or, to ſpeak more properly, he had RELIGION to overturn by taking away it's very ESSENCE: and as the *irregularities* in the preſent adminiſtration of providence ſtood in the way of his firſt attempt; and the *conſiſtency* of the moral Syſtem in the way of the other; when he argues againſt a *future State*, You would think there were no *irregularities*; and when he argues againſt the *moral attributes*, You would think there was no *conſiſtency*.

We now come to his Lordſhip's particular objections againſt the *moral attributes*. One of them is, that they are BOUNDED.

" They [the Divines] go further. As " God is perfect and man very imperfect, " they talk of his *infinite goodneſs and juſ-*

" *tice*, as of his infinite wiſdom and pow-

"er; tho' the latter may preserve their
"nature without any conceivable bounds,
"and the former must cease to be what
"they are, unless we conceive them
"BOUNDED. Their nature implies neces-
"sarily a limitation in the exercise of them.
"Thus then the *moral attributes*, accord-
"ing to this Theology, requires infinitely
"more of God to man than men are able,
"or would be obliged if they were able,
"to exercise to one another: greater pro-
"fusion in bestowing benefits and re-
"wards, greater vigour in punishing of-
"fences [14]."

You have here his Lordship's own words; and nothing less could induce any one to believe such misrepresentations could come from one, who had set himself up for an universal Righter of wrongs and Redresser of grievances. Permit me to examine the *premisses*; together with the *inferences* both *implied* and *expressed*.

He says, 1. that the *moral attributes* are *bounded*; 2. that the *natural* are *not bounded*. Let us see to what the first proposition amounts; and then, what truth there is in the second.

[14] Vol. v. p. 528.

The *moral attributes* are conſidered by us as relative to *intelligent* creatures; the *natural* are not ſo conſidered. Thus the goodneſs and juſtice, when relative to man, are greatly *bounded*: a certain low degree of reward ſuffices for his *good*; a certain low degree of puniſhment for his *evil* actions. Let God's goodneſs and juſtice reſpect a higher rank of intelligent Beings, and they will be then *leſs bounded*; for greater rewards and puniſhments will be required: and ſo on, to the higheſt rank of intelligent creatures. Yet as the higheſt is at infinite diſtance from the Creator, the exerciſe of the moral attributes, (that is, as they bear relation to his intelligent creatures,) muſt be ſtill *bounded*.

His ſecond propoſition is, that the natutural attributes are *not bounded*. It is true, theſe cannot be conſidered as relative to God's *intelligent* creatures; yet ſince they muſt be conſidered, in *their exerciſe*, as relative to his Creation at large; and ſince Creation, however immenſe, is not infinite, the natural attributes ſo conſidered are not infinite: but if not infinite, they are *bounded*. There is no difference therefore, in *the exerciſe* of God's attributes, be-

tween

tween the *moral* and the *natural*, ſave only in the degree.

But if we conſider God's *moral* and *natural* attributes more abſtractedly, not as they are *in the exerciſe*, and relative to intelligent Beings, and to actual Creation, but as they are in his nature, then they are both *unbounded*. Thus we ſee his Lordſhip's notable diſtinction is groundleſs and imaginary.

But let us give him all he aſks, and then ſee what he will be able to *infer* from it. His firſt inference ſeems to be this, As the *moral* attributes are bounded, and not infinite like the *natural*, our idea of them muſt be cloudy, obſcure, inadequate. What! becauſe they are better adapted to human contemplation? As things *bounded* certainly are, than things *infinite*. Our idea of ſuch of God's attributes as bear relation to a Being, whoſe nature and properties we know, namely MAN, muſt needs be more adequate and better defined than the idea of ſuch attributes as bear relation to Beings, whoſe nature and properties we know not, namely the UNIVERSE?

Let us conſider his other *inference*, which he expreſſes in theſe words: *Thus then the moral attributes, according to this Theology, requires infinitely more of God to man than men are able, or would be obliged if they were able, to exerciſe to one another.*

To ſay the moral attributes, according to Chriſtian Theology, or, as he is pleaſed to call it, *artificial Theology*, requires INFINITELY *more*, is a wretched calumny. To ſay it *requires more* is true. And for this plain reaſon: the relation between Creator and Creature is very diſtant from that between Fellow-creatures; therefore the *goodneſs* more abundant: The relation between Lord and Servant is very diſtant from that between Fellow-ſervants; therefore the *juſtice* more ſevere. And if it would not be deemed too IMPUDENT to refer his Lordſhip to Scripture for inſtruction (eſpecially in a matter where the abuſe of Scripture was chiefly intended) he might there have found a *Parable* which would have ſet him right: and has always kept *artificial Theology*, whatever he might think, from going wrong.

But

But *infinite*, when applied to the *exercise* of a moral attribute in reference to man, is his Lordſhip's nonſenſe, with due reverence be it ſaid, not the *nonſenſe of artificial Divines*. They were not ignorant that the rule, *infirmiorem vel deteriorem partem ſequitur conſequentia*, held as well in *Morals* as in *Logic*. Tho' God be infinite, man is finite; and therefore, with reſpect to him, the exertion of a *moral* attribute is finite, not infinite. His Lordſhip himſelf ſaw ſomething of this, as appears by his own words. *The nature of the moral attributes implies neceſſarily a limitation in the uſe of them.* And why would he not ſuppoſe Divines might ſee as far into this matter as himſelf?

But if there be an error in *artificial Theology* he is as ſure to eſpouſe it at one time or other, as he is, at all times, to calumniate the Divine who holds it. Men in their ill adviſed zeal to defend the Goſpel-doctrine of the Son's divinity, were not always ſufficiently careful in ſelecting their arguments. Amongſt ſuch as had, perhaps, been better let alone, they employed this, That as man's offence was againſt an infinite Being, it required an infinite ſatis-

faction; which none but ſuch a Being could give. Now it is on this very principle, we ſee, his Lordſhip goes about to diſcredit God's moral attributes, and the *artificial Theology* of Jeſus Chriſt.

As the being *bounded* is one of his Lordſhip's objections againſt the *moral attributes*, ſo another is, that ſome of them are merely HUMAN.

" After Dr. CLARKE (ſays he) has re-
" peated over and over that all the *moral*
" *attributes* are the ſame in God as in our
" ideas; and that he who denies them to
" be ſo may as well deny the divine *phyſical*
" *attributes*, the Doctor inſiſts only on
" two of the former, on thoſe of *juſtice* and
" *goodneſs*. He was much in the right to
" contract the generality of his aſſertion.
" The abſurdity of aſcribing TEMPE-
" RANCE, for inſtance, or FORTITUDE, to
" God, would have been too groſs, and too
" viſible even to eyes that prejudice had
" blinded the moſt. But that, of aſcribing
" *juſtice* and *goodneſs*, to him, according
" to our notions of them, might be better
" covered, and was enough for his purpoſe,
" tho' NOT LESS REALLY ABSURD [15]."

[15] Vol. v. p. 311.

Had

Had not his Lordſhip accuſtomed us by his reaſoning, as well as admoniſhed us by his motto [16], *to wonder at nothing*, this paragraph were enough to ſet his readers in *admiration*: doubtful indeed of their object, whether of his KNOWLEDGE or his INGENUITY.

When men contemplate what they call moral virtue, or the attributes of humanity, they divide them into two claſſes perfectly diſtinct from one another. In the firſt are comprized thoſe which belong to man under the idea of a free intelligent Being, ſuch as *goodneſs* and *juſtice*: in the ſecond, thoſe which belong to him under the idea of a creature of that very imperfect ſpecies, ſuch as *temperance* and *fortitude*. The firſt belong to all free intelligent Beings; the latter, only to ſuch a Being as man: *Thoſe* ariſe out of the nature of free intelligence, and ſo are common to all. *Theſe*, from the imperfections of a very inferior creature, and ſo are peculiar to humanity; for we eaſily conceive higher Orders of free intelligences, amongſt whom the moral virtues of the ſecond claſs have no place. They are ſuperior to the impreſſions

[16] *Nil admirari.*

of

of fear, and ſo have no need to exert *fortitude*: They are removed from the temptation of exceſs, and ſo have no room for the exerciſe of *temperance*.

Now when CLARKE, or any other Divine, had ſaid, that *the moral attributes are the ſame in God as in our ideas*, What attributes could they poſſibly mean but thoſe of the *firſt claſs*; thoſe which belong to Beings under the idea of free intelligences? STUPID as his Lordſhip is pleaſed to make Divines, they could never *blunder* to that degree as to conceive, that thoſe virtues or *moral attributes*, which proceed from the *imperfection* of the Creature, might belong in any manner to the Creator, whom they ſuppoſed to be *all perfect*.

They held, with his Lordſhip, and they will hold without him, that the great God is *infinitely* wiſe and powerful: Were they then in any danger to give him *temperance*, which implied his being obnoxious to *folly*; or *fortitude*, which argued *impuiſance*?

Infinite wiſdom, therefore, and infinite power exclude from God the very ideas of *temperance* and *fortitude*. But do infinite wiſdom and infinite power exclude from

God the ideas of *goodneſs* and *juſtice*? On the contrary, his Lordſhip, as we ſhall ſee preſently, is reduced to the poor ſhift of owning *goodneſs* and *juſtice* to be contained in infinite *wiſdom* and *power*. At preſent I would aſk another queſtion. What muſt his Lordſhip's admirers think of their Maſter's IPSE DIXIT, when it comes to this, *That the inſcribing goodneſs and juſtice to God is* NO LESS REALLY ABSURD *than the aſcribing temperance and fortitude to him?*

And now I might leave it to them to determine, whether this was *contracting the generality of the aſſertion to ſerve a purpoſe; the abſurdity of aſcribing temperance and fortitude to God being too groſs and too viſible to the moſt prejudiced.* For to what *purpoſe* could this *contraction*, as he calls it, *ſerve*, but to the purpoſe of COMMON SENSE? Had his Lordſhip but been pleaſed to *contract* himſelf on the ſame principle, his bulky Volumes had ſhrunk into a Pamphlet.

But then, if you aſk *what purpoſe* his Lordſhip had *to ſerve* when he uſed the equivocal word ALL, which may ſignify either *all* of one kind, or *all* of every kind,

where

where he ſays, Clarke holds, *that* ALL *the moral attributes are the ſame in God*, &c. ſhould you aſk this, the anſwer is obvious. It was to give himſelf an occaſion to ſay that Clarke afterwards *contracts his generality*, or, in other words, that he contradicts himſelf.

But let us conſider this *contracted generality* a little cloſer. Dr. CLARKE aſſerts, *that goodneſs and juſtice are the ſame in God as in our ideas:* This, if we believe his Lordſhip, is downright NONSENSE and BLASPHEMY. Lord BOLINGBROKE aſſerts, *that wiſdom and power are the ſame in God as in our ideas:* And this is SENSE and PIETY. How came his Lordſhip by this knowledge concerning God's wiſdom and power? He tells us, he got it *intuitively and by the help of his ſenſes* [17]. And do we not come to the knowledge of God's goodneſs and juſtice, in the very ſame way? Or is there any other way of acquiring it? How happens it then, that, of theſe two aſſertions, ſupported on the ſelf ſame principles of knowledge, the one is *nonſenſe and blaſphemy*, and the other *ſenſe and piety*? For a reaſon worthy the *firſt philoſophy*; What-

[17] Vol. iv. p. 116.

ever

ever his Lordſhip holds in contradiction to Divines, is *ſenſe* and *piety*; and whatever Divines hold in contradiction to his Lordſhip, is *nonſenſe* and *blaſphemy*.

A third objection againſt the *moral attributes* is, "That PASSIONS and AFFECTIONS mix with our goodneſs and juſtice; which therefore cannot be ſuppoſed to be *the ſame in kind* with God's; tho' our wiſdom and, power with which no paſſions or affections mix, muſt be *the ſame in kind*" with his.

Were paſſion and affection inſeparable from human goodneſs and juſtice, the objection might appear to have ſome tho' not much force, even then. But they are eaſily ſeparable: I do not mean in ſpeculation only, but in practice. The true idea of human goodneſs and juſtice excludes all paſſion and affection. What hinders then our riſing, from that idea, to divine goodneſs and juſtice, any more than our riſing, from the idea of human wiſdom and power to the divine wiſdom and power; and from perceiving that as well the *moral*, as the *natural* attributes, are the ſame in kind, both in God and man?

But,

But, this is not all that may be ſaid in favour of our adequate idea of God's *moral attributes*. For tho' paſſion mixes not with our *natural* attributes of wiſdom and power, yet ſomething elſe does, much more difficult to be ſeparated, than paſſion, from our *moral* attributes, I mean the INSTRUMENTALITY OF MATTER. We can conceive nothing of human POWER without the uſe of ſuch an inſtrument: yet this, by his Lordſhip's own confeſſion, does not hinder us from riſing from the idea of our own wiſdom and power, to the wiſdom and power of God; and from ſeeing that they are the ſame in kind.

But ſtill, further. The MANNER *of knowing* in God, on which depends his natural attribute of WISDOM, is confeſſedly different from what it is in man; and at the ſame time utterly unknown to us: yet this does not, according to his Lordſhip's account, hinder our attaining to an adequate idea of *divine wiſdom*, tho' it riſes from what we ſee of the *human*.

How happens it then, that, in both theſe caſes, notwithſtanding the foreign mixture of the *inſtrumentality of matter*, and

and the *manner of knowing*, we attain an adequate idea of God's wiſdom and power? His Lordſhip will tell you, it is by ſeparating that mixture from our ideas of wiſdom and power. And ſhall I not have as much credit with you, when I tell you we acquire an adequate idea of God's goodneſs and juſtice, by ſeparating from the idea of human goodneſs and juſtice the foreign mixture of *paſſion* and *affection*? You muſt admit both our aſſertions; or you muſt reject both. And when I ſay You, I mean every fair and ingenuous man like You; who having nothing to fear, and a great deal to hope from Religion, are, I think, the ableſt judges of it's truth. For HOPE encourages men to *ſearch* into the grounds of what Religion promiſes; but FEAR always deters them from giving much *attention* to what it threatens.

But his Lordſhip has a greater quarrel than all this, with the *moral attributes*. They are productive, he ſays, of much *miſchief*, by bringing in embarraſſed queſtions into Religion.

" As they [the Divines] modeled God's
" government on a human plan, ſo they
" conceived his perfections, *moral* as well

" phyſical

" phyſical, by human ideas — Thus God
" was ſaid to be the FIRST GOOD: but
" then the general notion or abſtract idea
" of this *good* was not only taken from
" human goodneſs, but was conſidered too
" with little or no other relation than to
" man — A queſtion aroſe therefore on
" theſe hypotheſes, *How could evil come into*
" *a ſyſtem of which God was the Author?* —
" this queſtion made a further hypotheſis
" neceſſary; another firſt God, another
" coeternal and coequal principle was in-
" troduced to ſolve it; *a firſt cauſe of all*
" *evil*, as the other was *of all good* [18]."

The falſe repreſentation of this fact I reſerve for another occaſion: the falſe inference from it is what I now propoſe to examine.

His Lordſhip ſuppoſes, that the principle of God's *moral attributes* gave birth to an inſolvable queſtion concerning *the origin of evil*: And that this occaſioned the invention of the miſchievous hypotheſis of the *two principles*. Who would have ſuſpected that ſo much evil could have come from the FIRST GOOD! Yet ſo it was.

[18] Vol, iv. p. 88.

And

And therefore the idea of ſuch a GOOD muſt be *falſe*, or, at leaſt, very *hurtful*.

1. As to the firſt, if his Lordſhip's inference be right, it will help to deprive us of all uſeful knowledge; becauſe there is no great principle, either in *phyſics*, or in *natural Theology*, which, if we be not on our guard and wiſe enough to ſtop at the extent of our ideas, will not lead us into inextricable difficulties.

Take an inſtance in one that ariſes out of both theſe ſciences, — *The agreement between free-will and preſcience*. I the rather chuſe this inſtance, as his Lordſhip has pretended to unty a knot, which hath ſo long kept the learned World intangled; and as one of the principal deſigns of this VIEW is to illuſtrate his Lordſhip's great talents. "Our ideas (ſays he) of di-
"vine intelligence and wiſdom may be
"neither *fantaſtical* nor *falſe*, and yet
"God's MANNER of knowing may be ſo
"different from ours, that fore-knowledge,
"as we call it *improperly in him*, may be
"conſiſtent with the contingency of events;
"altho' that which we call *properly* fore-
"knowledge *in ourſelves*, be not ſo [19]."

[19] Vol. v. p. 525.

I have two or three remarks to make on theſe words. The firſt is, that, by the very turn of the phraſe — *may be neither* — *and yet* — he appears conſcious of his own prevarication. Our ideas of God's *goodneſs* and *juſtice* he makes *fantaſtical* and *falſe*, on account of difficulties ariſing from them: yet God's *natural* attributes, his *intelligence and wiſdom*, *may*, he ſays, *be neither fantaſtical nor falſe*, tho' a difficulty as great ariſes from them; namely, the apparent diſcordancy between free-will and preſcience.

My ſecond remark is, that his ſolution of this difficulty is more *fantaſtic* than the wildeſt chimera of School-metaphyſics. Common-ſenſe informs us, that the difficulty, in reconciling *God's preſcience to man's free-will*, does not ariſe from our ignorance in God's MANNER OF KNOWING, but from his ACTUAL KNOWLEDGE.

My third remark is, that his Lordſhip, who is here ſo penetrating, that he can eaſily reconcile *preſcience* and *free-will*; is, in another place, ſo cloudy, that he cannot ſee how an *equal providence* and *free agency* may ſtand together.

My

My laſt remark is, and it riſes out of the foregoing, that where Religion is not concerned, his Lordſhip ſees no difficulties in any part of the ſyſtem of Creation: but as ſoon as ever Religion appears, then difficulties ſtart up by dozens.

Take now another inſtance from the caſe in hand. Our ideas of God's *moral attributes*, he ſays, muſt needs be falſe, becauſe the conceiving of them by human goodneſs and juſtice leads to the queſtion of the *origin of evil*, conſidered *morally*. Well. And does not the conceiving of God's *phyſical attributes* by human wiſdom and power lead to the queſtion of the *origin of evil* conſidered *naturally*? Yet our ideas of the phyſical attributes are neither *falſe nor fantaſtical*. But to this, his Lordſhip replies, Evil, conſidered *naturally*, is not real, but apparent only. Why ſo? Becauſe it contributes to the greater good of the whole. May not the ſame thing be ſaid of Evil, conſidered *morally*? Nay, hath it not been actually ſaid, and proved too, on the ſame principles? It follows then, that they are either both *real*, or both *fantaſtic*.

But preſumptuous man knows not when to ſtop. He would penetrate even to the Arcana of the Godhead.

" For Fools ruſh in where Angels fear to tread.

And this impious humour gave birth to the abſurd hypotheſis of TWO PRINCIPLES. But is the folly to be charged upon our idea of the *moral attributes?* Ridiculous! We ſee it's cauſe is in vanity and ſelf-conceit: paſſions that operate alike on all principles.

2. As to his Lordſhip's ſecond inference, that *this* idea is at leaſt productive of much *miſchief*; ſo that it would be better to have none at all; Let me obſerve, that the very idea of God's exiſtence is alike productive of miſchief, even all the miſchiefs of ſuperſtition. Is it therefore better to be without a God? Who, beſides his Lordſhip, would ſay ſo [20]. Why then ſhould we think it better to be without the idea of the *moral attributes*, even tho' the evils it produced were *neceſſary?* But

[20] He indeed ſays *he had rather be an Atheiſt than acknowledge the Chriſtian Theology*; and we may believe him. See Vol. iv. p. 34.

that

that is not the caſe. They are *caſual* only: the iſſue of pride and preſumption; which this idea does not at all influence.

However, theſe *moral attributes*, if not hurtful, are USELESS; and this is his next cavil. "Infinite *wiſdom* and *power* (ſays his Lordſhip) "have made things as they "are: how *goodneſs* and *juſtice* required "they ſhould be made is neither *coram* "*judice*, nor to any rational purpoſe to in-"quire [1]." To inquire how the *univerſe of things ſhould be made*, ſerves indeed *no reaſonable purpoſe*. But to inquire concerning our own ſtate and condition, is either *coram judice*, or we were ſent into the world to ſtare about us, and to judge of nothing. His Lordſhip's ſophiſtry ſeems to confound two things that common ſenſe has always diſtinguiſhed; *our own buſineſs from other men's*. When the King holds a bed of juſtice, 'tis not for every Particular to inquire into all his meaſures: But every Particular who is ſummoned to attend the Court, is much concerned to know how he himſelf ſhall be dealt with. His Lordſhip indeed, is ready to ſay, We are not ſummoned;

[1] Vol. v. p. 363.

that is, we are not *accountable creatures.* But this is begging the queſtion.

At length, he ends juſt where he ſet out, That we have NO IDEAS of the moral attributes. "Upon the whole matter we may "conclude ſafely from error, and in direct "oppoſition to CLARKE, that *goodneſs and* "*juſtice in God cannot be conceived, without* "*manifeſt preſumption and impiety, to be the* "*ſame as in the ideas we frame of theſe* "*perfections when we conſider them in men,* "*or when we reaſon about them abſtractedly* "*in themſelves*; but that in the ſupreme "Governor of the World they are ſome-"thing TRANSCENDENT, and of which we "cannot make any true judgment, nor ar-"gue with any certainty about them [2]." And in this his Lordſhip tells us he is juſtified by the authority of St. PAUL and Dr. BARROW. *Theſe two great Divines* (ſays he) *are on my ſide* [3]. Who would have thought of two ſuch honourable Supporters for his Lordſhip's Atchievements? One thing I have obſerved, which might occaſion ſome ſpeculation; A ſtrange propenſity in Free-thinkers to miſtake their enemies for their friends; and, which is more to be

[2] Vol. v. p. 359.

[3] Vol. v. p. 362.

lamented, as ſtrange a propenſity in the Clergy to miſtake their friends for their enemies. The turn is odd enough on both ſides: and, at firſt view, appears a little myſterious; when, perhaps, there may be no more in it than this, — Free-thinkers have employed this trick to enflame the Clergy's jealouſy: and the Clergy have unhappily fallen into the ſnare.

But after what has paſſed, who would expect that *the leather-dreſſing Pontiff*, of all men, ſhould have been thought worthy to ſupport the *firſt Philoſophy!* What has St. PAUL done at laſt, to deſerve ſo much honour? Why, in anſwer to the objections againſt God's diſpenſations in the religious World, the Apoſtle refers us "for entire "ſatisfaction to the incomprehenſible wiſ-"dom of God, who frequently, in the "courſe of his providence, ordereth things "in methods tranſcending our abilities to "diſcover or trace [4]."

This ſolution, which is here extolled for it's great *modeſty*, is quoted in another place for it's greater IMPUDENCE [5]. It may be one or the other, juſt as his Lordſhip is in humour; who, notwithſtanding

[4] Vol. v. p. 360.

[5] Vol. iii. p. 307.

his long ſtudy of LOCKE, ſeems totally to have loſt all ideas of MORAL MODES. How otherwiſe was it poſſible, after having treated all Mankind in the manner you have ſeen in my *firſt* Letter, and will further ſee in my *third*, he ſhould gravely tell his Friend, "That few men, he believes, "have CONSULTED others both *living* and "the *dead*, with LESS PRESUMPTION, and "in a GREATER SPIRIT OF DOCILITY, "than he has done [6]." I ſometimes thought a word wrong printed; and that for, *conſulted* we ſhould read, *inſulted*; for in a great man, there is no *preſumption*, whatever meanneſs there may be, in *inſulting* his inferiors. And as for his *docility* in doing it, that will hardly be diſputed; there being no Author, whom he has *inſulted* moſt, but from whom he has condeſcended to ſteal more: of which, (for want of a better at hand) I might give an inſtance in the perſon and writings of the Author of the *Divine Legation*.

But St. PAUL ſays, *we muſt have recourſe to the incomprehenſible wiſdom of God*. In good time. But how does this prove that,

[6] *Introductory Letter to Mr. Pope*, Vol iii. p. 320.

in Paul's opinion, we have no adequate idea of the *moral attributes?* Unleſs the *quality* of an Agent, and his *action*, be one and the ſame thing. You, Sir, have an *adequate* conception, I am ſure, of our gracious Monarch's *goodneſs* and *juſtice*; but you have a very imperfect comprehenſion of ſeveral of his State-meaſures. I have frequently attempted to illuſtrate my reaſoning on divine matters from examples in human Rulers. This is a tickliſh point. And therefore I have been very careful that thoſe *regal* acts by which I would illuſtrate the *divine*, be not ſuch as proceed from the weakneſs and imperfections of humanity. If they be, the inſtance is impertinent, and wide of the purpoſe. This was the more carefully to be obſerved, becauſe writers have carried theſe illuſtrations into much abuſe. And no body more than this Noble Lord; of whom it may be truly affirmed that, with all his negligence in writing, he has not omitted any one ſpecies of falſe reaſoning.

To proceed. Dr. BARROW, I preſume, will ſtand his Lordſhip in no better ſtead than St. *Paul.* "As the dealings of every "wiſe man (ſays the Doctor) are ſome-

"times

" times founded upon maxims, and admit
" juſtifications not obvious or penetrable by
" vulgar conceit, ſo may God act accord-
" ing to rules of wiſdom and juſtice, which
" it may be quite impoſſible by our facul-
" ties to apprehend, or with our means to
" deſcry. As there are natural modes of
" Being and operation, ſo there may be pru-
" dential and moral modes of proceeding,
" far above our reach, peculiar objects of
" divine wiſdom not to be underſtood by
" any creature, eſpecially by creatures who
" ſtand in the loweſt form of intelligence;
" one remove from beaſts. In fine, thoſe
" rules of equity and experience which we
" in our tranſactions with one another do
" uſe, if they be applied to the dealings of
" God will be found very incongruous or
" deficient, the caſe being vaſtly altered
" from that infinite diſtance in nature and
" ſtate between God and us, and from
" the immenſe difference which his rela-
" tions towards us have from our relations
" to one another [7]."

What now has all this, which relates only to the *incomprehenſible nature of God's providence*, to do with our *inadequate ideas*

[7] Vol. v. p. 361, 2.

of

of his moral attributes? At leaſt, if his Lordſhip will contend, that the man who thinks God's providence *incomprehenſible*, muſt needs think our ideas of his moral attributes *inadequate*; he muſt go a ſtep further; and confeſs, that *Barrow* ſuppoſed our ideas of the *natural* attributes to be *inadequate* likewiſe; for he puts both on the ſame footing. *As there are* NATURAL *modes of Being and operation*, (ſays the Doctor) *ſo there may be prudential and* MORAL *modes of proceeding far above our reach.* But as this would be going too far, farther than the *firſt Philoſophy* will allow of, I ſuppoſe he would be content to admit this quotation from *Barrow* to be nothing to the purpoſe.

At laſt, and when you would leaſt expect it, Common-ſenſe and Common-ſentiments return. And God's *moral attributes*, after much ado, are allowed to be in Nature. "Where Religions (ſays his "Lordſhip) which pretend to be revealed, "prevail, a new character of God's *goodneſs* ariſes — an *artificial* goodneſs which "ſtands often in the place of the NATURAL [8]." And this, after having ſo often told us that we have no adequate

[8] Vol. v. p. 431.

idea

ea of God's goodneſs by *nature*. It comes ſcantily indeed; and, in every ſenſe, *a poſteriori*: However, it comes, and deſerves to be welcomed. "All the know-
"ledge (ſays he) that God has given us the
"means to acquire, and therefore all he
"deſigned we ſhould have of his phyſical
"and MORAL nature and attributes, is
"derived from *his works*, and from the
"TENOUR OF THAT PROVIDENCE by
"which he governs them [9]."

You will obſerve the words — *the tenour of that providence* — I have detected the ſophiſtry of them in my previous obſervation, at the entrance on the argument, where I have ſtated the meaning of the terms, *God's works*. I bid you obſerve them now, to judge of the following *climax*, if I may ſo call it, or *walk down ſtairs*. "The *wiſdom* is not ſo often diſ-
"cernible by us [in God's works] as the
"*power* of God, nor the *goodneſs* as the
"wiſdom [10]."

As cautious as his Lordſhip is here, in the ſlender allowance of God's *moral attributes* from his *works*, yet even this is a flat contradiction to what his Syſtem has oblig-

[9] Vol. v. p. 523, 4. [10] Vol. v. p. 335.

ed him over and over to affirm; as particularly in the following words --- *Of divine goodneſs and divine juſtice* (ſays his Lordſhip in the perſon of Anaxagoras) *I am unable to frame any adequate notions* [11], *from God's works.*

But, he is more free of his conceſſions in another place.

" By natural Theology (ſays his Lord-
" ſhip) we are taught to acknowledge and
" adore the infinite *wiſdom* and *power* of
" God, which he has manifeſted to us in
" ſome degree or other in every part, even
" the moſt minute, of his Creation. *By*
" *that too, we are taught to aſcribe goodneſs*
" *and juſtice to him, wherever he intend-*
" *ed we ſhould ſo aſcribe them,* that is,
" wherever either his works, or the diſpen-
" ſations of his providence do as NECESSA-
" RILY communicate theſe notions to our
" minds, as thoſe of wiſdom and power
" are communicated to us, in the whole
" extent of both [12]."

What his Lordſhip would infer from hence is this, that we are no where taught

[11] Vol. iv. p. 116, 17. [12] Vol. v. p. 527.

to aſcribe *goodneſs* and *juſtice* to God; ſince the diſpenſations of his providence do no where, in his Lordſhip's opinion, NECESSARILY *communicate theſe notions*. But allow his premiſes; would his concluſion follow? Suppoſe the diſpenſations of God's providence did only PROBABLY communicate theſe notions to our minds; will not this teach us to aſcribe *goodneſs and juſtice* to him? God hath ſo framed the conſtitution of things, that man ſhould, throughout his whole conduct in life, be induced to form his judgment on appearances and probable arguments. Why not in this, then, as well as in the reſt? or rather, why not in this, above the reſt? If ſo be that indeed God had not (as I have ſhewn he hath) *neceſſarily* communicated theſe notions. But what is this to our *adequate* idea of the moral attributes, the point in queſtion? God's not *neceſſarily communicating* the idea affects only the *reality*, not the *preciſion* of it. All therefore we learn by this obſervation, is, that his Lordſhip, by thus putting the change upon us, has a very ſtrong inclination, that God ſhould have neither *goodneſs* nor *juſtice*; ſo far

far as they carry with them any DISPOSITION to *reward* or *punish*. For as to the Attributes *themselves*, diveſted of their conſequences; and undiſturbed by our *impious imitation* [13], he has little or no quarrel with them. His Lordſhip certainly never intended to *teach* the common Reader more of the ſecrets of his *Philoſophy* than what NECESSARILY ariſes from his poſitions. But to make God treat Mankind ſo, with regard to his *attributes*, is drawing an image of the Deity from his own likeneſs, the very fault he ſo cenſures in Divines. But if God muſt needs be repreſented either after Them, or after his Lordſhip; I ſhould chuſe to have the Clergy's God, tho' made out of no better ſtuff than ARTIFICIAL THEOLOGY, becauſe that gives him *goodneſs* and *juſtice*; rather than his Lordſhip's God, which has neither; altho' compoſed of the more refined materials of the FIRST PHILOSOPHY. In the mean time, I will not deny but He may be right in what he ſays, That men conceive of the Deity, *more humano*; and that his Lordſhip's God

[13] *Our obligation to imitate God is a falſe and profane Doctrine.* Vol. v. p. 65.

and the Clergy's God, are equally faithful copies of themſelves.

In a word, if God *teaches*, whether it be done clearly or obſcurely, he certainly *intended* we ſhould learn. And what we get even by appearances, is *real* knowledge, upon his Lordſhip's own principles. For if truth be, as he aſſures us it is, of ſo precarious a nature as to take it's Being from our own ſyſtem, it muſt be *real* as far as it *appears*. "Our knowledge (ſays "this great Philoſopher) is ſo dependent "on our own ſyſtem, that a great part "of it would not be *knowledge* perhaps, "but *error* in any other [14]."

It is thus he involves himſelf in perpetual contradictions: But it is always thus, when men *diſpute* (for *believe* they cannot [15],) againſt *common notices*, and the moſt obvious truths; ſuch as *liberty of will*; the *certainty of knowledge*; and this, which, I reckon, obtrudes itſelf upon us as forcibly

[14] Vol. iii. p. 356.

[15] Hear what he himſelf ſays of FREE-WILL. *The free-will of man no one can deny he has, without* LYING, *or renouncing his intuitive knowledge.* Vol. v. p. 406.

as

as either, the MORAL ATTRIBUTES OF THE DEITY.

But the game is now on foot. Let us follow closely. We have unravelled him through all his turnings; and we may soon expect to see him take shelter in the thick cover of God's incomprehensible Nature; and rather than allow, in good earnest, the *moral attributes* of the Deity, ready to resolve all his Attributes, both *natural* and *moral*, into one INDEFINITE PERFECTION.

But soft. Not yet. We must come to it by degrees, and regular advances. First the *moral attributes* are to be *resolved* into the *natural*.

— "If they [the *natural* and *moral* attributes] "may be considered separately, as "we are apt to consider them; and if the "LATTER and every thing we ascribe to "these, are not to be RESOLVED *rather into* "*the former*; into his infinite intelligence, "wisdom, and power [16]." It is yet, we see, but a question; and that only, whether the *moral* attributes are not to be resolved into the *natural*. In the next passage it is determined. "I think (and

[16] Vol. v. p. 523, 4.

what he thinks, he holds it reaſonable all the world ſhould think too) " that the *mo-*
" *ral* attributes of the ſupreme Being are
" *abſorbed in his wiſdom*; that we ſhould
" conſider them only as different modificati-
" ons of this *phyſical* attribute [17]."

We are not yet near the top. However, before we go higher, let us ſet together his inconſiſtencies as they appear in this ſituation Sometimes *the ideas of divine wiſdom are better determined than thoſe of divine goodneſs* [18]. Sometimes *we have no ideas at all of divine goodneſs* [19]. And ſometimes again, as in the place before us, the *divine goodneſs is the ſame as wiſdom*, and therefore, doubtleſs, the idea of it as well determined. Now, of all theſe aſſertions, which will his Lordſhip ſtick by? Which, do you aſk? By none of them longer than they will ſtick by him; and ſtraggling, undiſciplined Principles, picked up at adventures, are not apt to ſtick long by any ſide. As ſoon as they begin to incline towards the enemy, he has done with them.— Come, if you will have the ſecret, take it. The attributes are mere NAMES,

[17] Vol. v. p. 335. [18] Vol. v. p. 341, 526.
[19] Vol. iv. p. 116, 17.

and

and there is an end of them. All that really remains is one undefined ETERNAL REASON: And ſo the Farce concludes.

"The moral ATTRIBUTES (ſays he)
"are *barely* NAMES that we give to various
"manifeſtations of the infinite wiſdom of
"one *ſimple uncompounded being* [20]."

"Of divine goodneſs and divine juſtice
"I am unable to frame any adequate no-
"tions; and inſtead of conceiving ſuch
"diſtinct moral attributes in the ſupreme
"Being, *we ought, perhaps, to conceive no-*
"*thing more than this*, that THERE ARE
"VARIOUS APPLICATIONS OF ONE ETER-
"NAL REASON, WHICH IT BECOMES US
"LITTLE TO ANALYZE INTO ATTRI-
"BUTES [1]."

To this miſerable refuge is his Lordſhip reduced, to avoid DIVINE JUSTICE. But why, you ſay, did he not ſpeak out at firſt, and end his quarrel with the *moral attributes* at once? Your humble ſervant, for that. Barefaced NATURALISM has not ſuch charms as to make her received wherever, and whenever, ſhe comes. There is need of much preparation, and more diſguiſe, before you can get her ad-

[20] Vol. v. p. 453. [1] Vol iv. p. 117.

mitted even to what is called *good company*. But now, he has reſolved to ſpeak out, Why, you aſk, does it yet ſeem to ſtick in the paſſage? And when his premiſſes are general againſt *all* attributes, his concluſion is particular againſt the *moral*? Not without cauſe, I aſſure you. He had need of the *natural* attributes, to ſet up againſt the *moral*: and therefore had himſelf actually *analyzed* this *eternal reaſon* into the ſpecific attributes of *wiſdom* and *power*. But when he ſaw his adverſaries might, by the ſame way, analyze it into *goodneſs and juſtice*, He then thought fit to pick a quarrel with his own method: but it was to be done obliquely. And hence ariſes his embarraſs and tergiverſation. He would willingly, if his Reader be ſo pleaſed, analyze the *eternal reaſon* into *wiſdom* and *power*: but there he would ſtop: and leave the other ſide of the *eternal reaſon*, unanalyzed: and if *goodneſs* and *juſtice* ſhould chance to ſtart out, he has a trick to *reſolve* and *abſorb* them into wiſdom and power, as only *different modifications of the phyſical attributes*. But if this revolts his Readers, and they expect equal meaſure; then, rather than give them back

the

the *goodneſs* and *juſtice* he has been at all this pains to *aſcribe*, he will throw *wiſdom and power* after them, and *reſolve* all into the ONE ETERNAL REASON.

Baſhful NATURALISM has now thrown aſide her laſt and thinneſt vail: and is ready, we ſee, to face down her Rival; whom till now ſhe was content to counterfeit. Give me leave, therefore, to repreſs this laſt effort of her inſolence by another paſſage from the *Sermons* quoted once or twice already.

— "We have been told, and with airs of "ſuperior knowledge, that theſe pretend-"ed attributes, as they are commonly "ſpecified, and diſtinguiſhed into *natural* "and *moral*, are a mere human fiction; "invented, by aid of analogy from the "actions, paſſions, and qualities obſervable "in man: and that the ſimple nature of "Deity is one uniform perfection; of "which, Infinity being the baſe, we can "have no diſtinct idea or conception.

"To this it will be ſufficient to reply, "that it is indeed true, that theſe ſpecific "attributes, from which we deduce all "our knowledge of the nature and will of "God, are formed on analogy, and bear

" relation to ourſelves. But then we ſay
" ſuch attributes are not, on that account,
" the leſs real or eſſential. The light of
" the SUN is not, in the orb itſelf, what
" we ſee it in the RAINBOW. There
" it is one candid, uniform, perfect blaze
" of glory: here, we ſeparate it's Perfec-
" tion in the various attributes of red, yel-
" low, blue, purple and what elſe the ſubtle
" optician ſo nicely diſtinguiſhes. But ſtill
" the *ſolar* light is not leſs real in the Rain-
" bow, where it's rays become thus un-
" twiſted, and each differing thread diſ-
" tinctly ſeen in its effect, than while they
" remained united and incorporated with
" one another in the Sun. Juſt ſo it is
" with the divine Nature: it is one ſimple
" undividual Perfection in the Godhead
" himſelf: but when refracted and divari-
" cated, in paſſing through the medium of
" the human mind, it becomes power,
" juſtice, mercy; which are all ſeparately
" and ADEQUATELY repreſented to the
" underſtanding [2]."

But, that his Lordſhip ſo frequently diſcards his own principles, I ſhould be

[2] *The principles of natural and revealed Religion, in a courſe of Sermons at Lincoln's Inn*, Vol. i. p. 57, 58.

in

in hopes he would ſubmit to this illuſtration, ſince he owns THAT WE SEE THE DEITY IN A REFLECTED, NOT IN A DIRECT LIGHT [3].

It is a *true* light then and not a *falſe* one: and the knowledge it conveys is *real*, not *fantaſtic*: For mirrors do not uſe to reflect the ſpecies of the mind's viſions, but ſubſtantial things. To turn us, therefore, from God's *attributes*, tho' the *indirect*, yet the well-defined, image of him, becauſe they diſcover ſomething to us we may not like, a HELL and a FUTURE JUDGMENT; to turn us, I ſay, to the *undefined eternal reaſon*, is doing like the french Philoſophers, who, when they quarrelled with Newton's Theory of light and colours, contrived to break the priſm, by which it was demonſtrated.

And now, Sir, to conclude my long Letter. Who is there that deſerves the name of MAN, and will not own that they are the MORAL ATTRIBUTES of the Deity which make him AMIABLE; juſt as the *natural attributes* make him revered and adorable? What is his Lordſhip's German-quarrel with the God of MOSES and PAUL, but

[3] Vol. v. p. 524.

that they have made him *unamiable*, by repreſenting him without *goodneſs* or *juſtice*? *Their God*, therefore, he expreſly tells us, *ſhall not be his God*. Well then: He has his God to make. And who would not expect to find him, when made by ſuch a Workman as his Lordſhip, a God of infinite goodneſs and juſtice. No ſuch matter: Theſe qualities come not out of his Lordſhip's hands, nor can enter into the compoſition of his God: They are *barely* NAMES *that men give to various manifeſtations of the infinite wiſdom of one ſimple uncompounded Being*. The pretended want of them in the God of the Jews afforded his Lordſhip a commodious cavil; for he had RELIGION to remove out of his way: But when he came to erect NATURALISM in it's ſtead, it had been inconvenient to give them to his own Idol.

Honeſt Plutarch, tho' a Prieſt, was as warm an enemy to PRIEST-CRAFT as his Lordſhip. He derives all the evils of Superſtition from men's not acquiring the idea of a God infinitely good and juſt. And propoſes this knowledge as the only cure for it. This is conſiſtent. But what would the ancient world have thought of their

their Philoſopher, had his remedy, after hunting for it through a hundred volumes, been a God without any goodneſs and juſtice at all.

NATURE tells us, that the thing moſt deſirable is the knowledge of a God whoſe goodneſs and juſtice gives to every man according to his works.

HIS LORDSHIP tells us, that REASON or NATURAL RELIGION diſcovers to us no ſuch God.

Now, if both ſpeak truth, How much are we indebted to REVELATION! Which, when *natural Religion* fails us, brings us to the knowledge of a God infinitely good and juſt; and gives us an *adequate* idea of thoſe attributes! And this, by his Lordſhip's own confeſſion. — *Chriſtianity*, ſays he, DISCOVERS *the love of God to man; his infinite* JUSTICE *and* GOODNESS [4].

Is this a bleſſing to be rejected? His Lordſhip had no room to ſay ſo, ſince the diſcovery is made in that very way, in which, upon his principles, it only could be made.

He pretends, "We have no other natural way of coming to the knowledge of God but

[4] Vol. v. p. 532.

from

from his *works*. By thoſe, *he ſays*, we gain the idea of his *phyſical attributes*; and if there be any thing in his *works* which ſeems to contradict theſe attributes, 'tis only ſeeming. For as men advance in the knowledge of nature, thoſe difficulties vaniſh. It is not ſo, he ſays, with regard to the *moral attributes*. There are ſo many *phænomena* which contradict theſe, and occaſion difficulties never to be cleared up, that they hinder us from acquiring an *adequate* idea of the *moral attributes*."

Now admitting all this to be true, for generally his Lordſhip's aſſertions are ſo extravagant, that they will not admit a ſuppoſition of their truth, tho' it be only for argument's ſake, What does it effect but this, *additional credit to Revelation?*

The *phyſical difficulties* clear up as we advance in our knowledge of *Nature*, and we advance in proportion to our diligence and application. But the *moral difficulties* never clear up, becauſe they riſe out of the *Whole Syſtem* of God's moral diſpenſation; which is involved in clouds and darkneſs, impenetrable to mortal ſight: and all the application of human wit alone will never enable us to draw the veil. The clear

proſpect

proſpect of it muſt come from another quarter. It muſt come, if it comes at all, from the Author of the Diſpenſation. Well; *Revelation* hath drawn this veil, and thereby removed the darkneſs which obſtructed our attaining an *adequate* idea of the *moral* attributes. Shall we yet ſtand out? And when we are brought hither upon his Lordſhip's own principles, aſſuredly you muſt. *Beware* (ſays he) *of a pretended revelation.* Why ſo? *Becauſe* (ſays he again) *the Religion of nature is perfect and abſolute; and therefore Revelation can teach nothing but what Religion hath already taught* [5]. Strange! Why, *Revelation* teaches the moral attributes; which you, my Lord, own, *natural Religion* does not teach — Here the dialogue breaks off; and leaves us in a riddle. Will you have the ſolution? It is ridiculous enough; as ſuch kind of things generally are. But if you have kept your good humour amidſt all theſe provocations of impiety, it may perhaps make you ſmile.

I told you before, that his Lordſhip borrowed all his reaſoning againſt Revelation, from ſuch as Tindal, Toland, Col-

[5] Vol. v. p. 544.

lins,

lins, Chubb, and Morgan. This ſolemn argument particularly, of the PERFECTION OF NATURAL RELIGION, and the ſuperſeded uſe of Revelation, he delivers to us juſt as he found it in Tindal.

Now Tindal, who held that natural Religion taught both the *moral attributes* and a *future ſtate*, had ſome pretence for ſaying that *it was perfect and abſolute*. But for his Lordſhip to ſay it after him, who holds that natural Religion taught neither *one* nor the *other*, ſhews, that either he places a very implicit faith in his Author, or expects it from his Reader.

The truth is, Lord Bolingbroke refuſed no arms againſt Revelation. So when he had drained his Authors of their Principles; to make all ſure, he adds others of his own. Little attentive to a truth of long experience, That the arguments of infidelity, which, like Cadmus's *Children of braſs*, ſpring from the *old dragon's teeth*, are always deſtroying one another, tho' aiming at a common Enemy. Buſy at this blind work he goes on puſhing his maſter Tindal's conſequences at a ſtrange rate. *If revealed Religion teaches more than natural, it muſt be falſe; if no more, it muſt*

 be

be ſuperfluous. This is plauſible on Tindal's principles, that natural Religion has both the *moral attributes* and a *future ſtate*; but utterly abſurd on his Lordſhip's, who holds that it has neither. But the too eager purſuit of his old Adverſary, RELIGION, has led his Lordſhip into many of theſe ſcrapes.

I have now conſidered all I could find urged by the noble Writer in ſupport of his great principle of NO ADEQUATE IDEAS OF GOD'S MORAL ATTRIBUTES; on which the whole ſyſtem of NATURALISM is, and muſt be, founded. And you ſee to what this *all*, amounts. If I ſhould ſay to *juſt nothing*, I ſhall ſpeak more favourably of it than it deſerves. For it tends, as I have ſhewn you, in many inſtances, to confirm the great TRUTH it is brought to overthrow.

And now what I propoſed for the ſubject of this *ſecond* Letter is pretty well exhauſted. My *firſt* was employed in giving you a ſpecimen of his *Temper*. This undertakes to explain his *Syſtem*; and I reſerve the next for a diſplay of his marvellous *Talents*; tho' it be true, I have ſomewhat anticipated the Subject. For you cannot but have conceived already a very uncommon

mon idea of his abilities, on ſeeing him uſe TINDAL's ARGUMENTS *againſt Revelation*, and *for the perfection of atural Religion*, along with his OWN PRINCIPLES of *no moral attributes* and *no future ſtate*. The firſt of which principles makes one entire abſurdity of all he borrows from Tindal againſt *Revelation*; and the *ſecond* takes away the very pretenſe for PERFECTION in *natural Religion*.

His Lordſhip's friend, *Swift*, has ſomewhere or other obſerved, that no ſubject in all nature but RELIGION could have advanced *Toland* and *Aſgill* into the claſs of reputable Authors. Another of his friends ſeems to think that no ſubject but RELIGION could have ſunk his Lordſhip ſo far below it; *If ever Lord Bolingbroke trifles*, (ſays Pope) *it will be when he writes on Divinity* [6].

But this is the ſtrange fate of Authors, whether with wit, or without, when they chuſe to write on certain ſubjects. For it is with Authors, as with men: Who can gueſs *which Veſſel was made for honour, and which for diſhonour?* when ſometimes, one and the ſame is made for both. Even

[6] *Pope's works*, Vol. ix. Letter xiv.

this

this choice Veſſel of the *firſt Philoſophy*, his Lordſhip's ſacred pages, may be put to very different uſes, according to the different tempers in which they may find his few Friends and the Public; like the *China Jordan* in the DUNCIAD, which one Hero piſſed into, and another carried home for his Head-piece.

I am, *&c.*

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Warburton, William,

A View Of Lord Bolingbroke's Philosophy In Four Letters to a Friend

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